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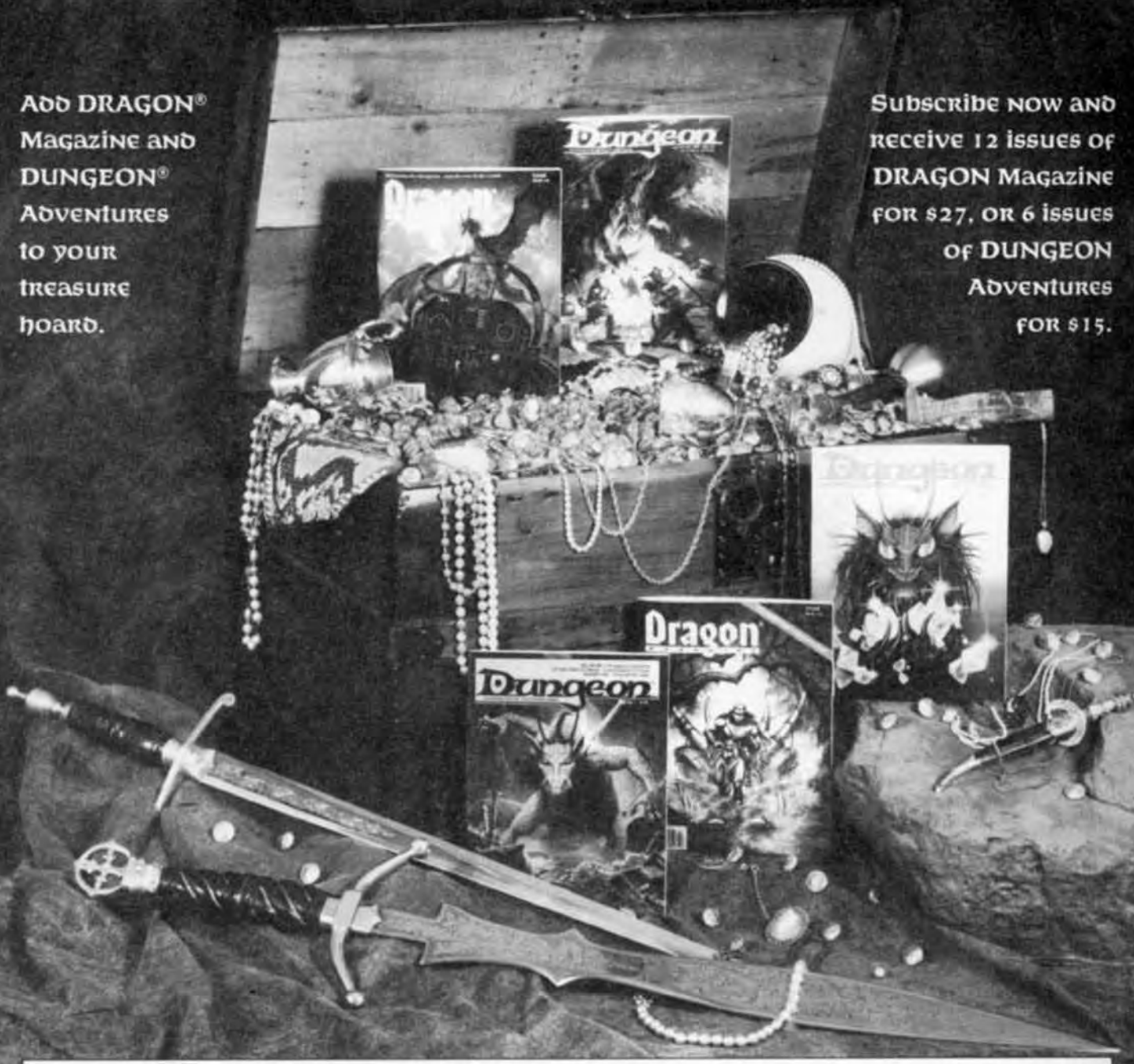

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Dungeon®
ADVENTURES FOR TSR® ROLE-PLAYING GAMES SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1989 ISSUE #19

COVER: Beware if you draw the wrong card from the *deck of many things*. You may have to fight the grim death in Bob Eggleton's cover painting for "House of Cards."

The Usual Suspects

In the last scene of *Casablanca*, Humphrey Bogart shoots the German general. Instead of arresting Bogart for the murder, Captain Louis orders his men to "round up the usual suspects."

I was reminded of this scene when I read a recent letter from a reader. "Why don't you give some new people a chance instead of printing adventures by the same people all the time?" he asked. I pictured myself standing on a windswept runway shouting, "Round up the usual writers!"

The truth is, we don't assign adventures to anyone. The ideas that come to us sink or swim on their own merits. No one is told what type of adventure to write, and none of our writers are employees of TSR, Inc. We read everything that comes into our offices. If two modules of equal quality are received, I'd prefer to publish one by a new author before one sent in by someone whose name has appeared many times. I believe in variety and want to avoid feeding the perception that DUNGEON® Adventures is a "closed shop."

There are, however, several basic differences between those authors whose work regularly appears and those whose adventures appear only once—or not at all. One of the biggest differences is a sense of professionalism. A writer must be able to take suggestions and use them to improve his work. Those authors who aren't too afraid or too proud to rewrite their work are the types of professionals whom we look on with favor.

The second most important factor in getting your work published is perseverance, even in the face of sometimes impersonal rejection letters. We reject manuscripts sent in by old and new writers equally. The difference is that those people whose names you see regularly keep sending in their ideas. They aren't discouraged by rejection. Occasionally, the first module sent in by an author is accepted. More likely, a writer will submit many ideas before we ask to see a full adventure, and then there is no guarantee that the adventure will be accepted. One writer tried seven times to get a proposal approved, and was turned down seven times. His eighth and ninth proposals caught my attention, and he delivered excellent manuscripts that will appear in future issues.

If *you* would like to see your name in our table of contents, start by polishing your writing skills—then write, and keep at it until you succeed.

Barbara G. Young

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I grew more and more afraid of him and at the same time—who can explain it?—more and more eager for the hour of our meeting.

Grendel, upon sighting Beowulf
Grendel, John Gardner

LETTERS

Vecna: Legend or Truth?

I was looking through issue #17 and saw the adventure "Out of the Ashes." I was pleased because it fit my campaign well, both by level of my players and the fact they are presently trying to find and destroy another artifact associated with Vecna: the *sword of Kas.*

The characters have been on two major adventures so far where this is the theme, based on the legend given under the description of the sword ([1st edition] *Dungeon Masters Guide,* page 161). The legend states that Vecna was killed at the hands of his lieutenant.

I was very disturbed when I read the adventure and found such quotes as "When Vecna fell beneath a hail of swords and sorcery, his corpse was flung into the great pool of lava . . ." and "These great rents in the earth are indeed where Vecna met his end."

These quotes seem contradictory to the legend given in the [1st edition] *DMG.* Can you explain to me how the adventure's story of Vecna's death fits in with the legend of the *sword of Kas* (which would help my campaign development a lot), or tell me if I should just trash the campaign.

Matthew Curley
Galveston, Texas

Don't trash your campaign. Flame got this story about Vecna from Opikus's library and used it and the phony artifacts as a ruse to get the PCs to travel to the Ring of Flame. As stated on page 46 of issue #17, Opikus "was obsessed with locating the genuine artifacts and had an entire wall of his library dedicated to books and scrolls on the subject of Vecna." It's not difficult to believe that Opikus had collected many (probably contradictory) legends about Vecna in his search for the truth. Flame simply selected the story that best fit his purposes.

Page 91 of the AD&D® 2nd Edition Dungeon Master's Guide *says that "Little is known of this being [Vecna] except that he eventually met his doom in some awesome conflagration."*

Send for Guidelines

I recently purchased my first DUNGEON® Magazine and was more than thrilled with its contents. I have been into the AD&D game for over a year now and find it a fascinating way to spend a day. I have been giving consideration to writing several modules myself, and it seems that your magazine offers the best opportunity for getting them published.

So, I would appreciate the following information:

1. What are the requirements for submission of game module ideas to DUNGEON Adventures?
2. What are the payment rates for game modules accepted by DUNGEON Adventures?
3. Do you have any advice for beginning module writers, to help them create the type of modules DUNGEON Adventures wants to publish?
4. What types and levels of game modules are needed?

Thank you for your time and assistance. I'm looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Name Withheld

Unfortunately, we couldn't answer this letter personally because the writer forgot to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The answers to all the above questions can be found in our writers' guidelines, available at no charge. Just send a SASE to: Guidelines, DUNGEON Adventures, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

Map Scale Errors?

I believe I have noted discrepancies in the map scales for issue #7's "Tortles of the Purple Sage" and issue #16's "Palace in the Sky." If the map scales are taken literally, both maps would be larger than the lands and environs of the D&D® game wilderness, especially issue #16's cloud island.

I'm not sure about the correct map scale for the "Tortles" area map; my guess is 8 miles per hex. I believe the cloud island's discrepancies come from the omission of a decimal point between the second and third number, giving the island a credible size of 29 miles north-south and 20 miles east-west.

Mike Limbaugh
Orlando, Florida

There is no error on the area map for "Tortles of the Purple Sage." This map corresponds directly with the color fold-out map on the back cover of module X9 The Savage Coast. *The 24 miles per hex scale is correct, as the wilderness here is vast. It is, perhaps, too large a territory to be covered by one adventure.*

There is indeed an error in the scale for the cloud island map in "Palace in the Sky," but it's not the error you suggest. The scale should be in feet, not miles. It should also be noted that this adventure was written for the AD&D game system, not the D&D game.

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Wanted: Alternate Settings

Your readers' survey asked several good questions. I think putting out a survey card like this every once in a while would be a good idea. It will keep you in touch with your readers' likes and wants.

I find it hard to believe that the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® setting rated so low. I am a DM of eight players who enjoy the Greyhawk system very much. I agree with Hal Looby's letter in issue #15 when he suggested you print more modules in the Greyhawk campaign.

Dale Flanagan
Carson City, Nevada

I would like to congratulate you on your variety of modules, though more set in Greyhawk and the Forgotten Realms would be appreciated. And what about the world of Nehwon? A few short scenarios from there would be helpful, as would adventures set on other planes. I also find the comedy-style adventures a welcome relief from the regular grinding encounters and would appreciate more of them in the future.

I have a problem obtaining U.S. stamps to enclose with an SASE to obtain a copy of the module guidelines. Is there any alternative to the SASE?

Roy Scafe
Dawson Creek, British Columbia

We are open to adventures set in other universes, such as Greyhawk and Lankhmar, but have received very few that we want to publish.

If you live outside the United States, you can prepay return postage by buying International Reply Coupons at your local post office.

But Can You Trademark a "&"?

I thought I would get in my 2 cp worth in regard to the ongoing controversy over solo modules. Like most people, I prefer playing D&D games in a group to playing a solo adventure. But I would rather play a solo adventure than do many other things, so I do not feel you print nearly enough of them.

Perhaps someday TSR will find it profitable to publish a magazine exclusively devoted to single-character adventures. Since both "Dungeon" and "Dragon" are taken as names, it would have to be called "&" which is, of course, a solo character and therefore appropriate.

Meanwhile, keep up the good work. I enjoy the artwork and find the modules both challenging and stimulating.

Also, let George Barr know that I noticed the Leonard Nimoy elf on page 21 of issue #17.

John Patrick Wall
Palatine, Illinois

To Box, Or Not to Box

I have been playing and dungeon-mastering the AD&D game for six years and find your magazine great for adventures with new and refreshing ideas. It is great to know that, if you only have 15 minutes until you play a game, you can pick up a DUNGEON Magazine, read through an adventure, and play it. But I do have one suggestion that would improve your adventures a great deal.

One of the main reasons I purchase your magazine is for a quick adventure that can be integrated into my campaign with little trouble. Adventures like "The Elephant's Graveyard" [issue #15], "The Hunt in Great Allindel" [issue #17], and "The Wreck of the Shining Star" [issue #15] are great examples. All these adventures have one thing in common. The important information that needs to be read to the player characters is boxed, allowing the DM to easily read a description for each room.

I think it would be a good idea to make all future authors write their adventures in the boxed text form. Adventures like "Palace in the Sky," "Vesicant" [both in issue #16], "and "Stranded on the Baron's Island" [issue #14] are all magnificent, with great plots, but they are much too long, and just writing up the descriptions for them would take a few hours at least. The only way to successfully run one of the real long adventures without writing out descriptions of what the characters see is to have the whole adventure memorized, which takes much too long and requires reading the adventure at least three times. I have also tried highlighting with a marker, but this requires a great deal of time, and you end up with a choppy description.

I hope that you will take this letter seriously into account, as I have found that your best adventures are all written in such a way as to be impossible to use without a great deal of work.

Shado Hart
Columbia, Maryland

We like some variety in the presentation of adventure modules. Some adventures seem to lend themselves to boxed descriptions while others do not, just as some DM's want to read a prepared script while others resent being told what to say and how to say it.

What do the readers say? Should every adventure have boxed descriptions to be read to the players? Send your cards and letters to: Letters, DUNGEON Magazine, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

Mixed Praise

Congratulations on issue #17! After reaching what I considered a low point in #16, you bounced right back. Issue #16 had an ugly cover, another cloud castle adventure (ho-hum), a dwarven "adventure" that was largely a dwarven village, a dull undead scenario, and a rather clever dragon adventure that nevertheless had a huge proportion of city random encounters and descriptions that made it very dull to read.

Not so in issue #17, where everything sparkles from the cover onwards. I've already played in "The Pit" and found it rich in atmosphere and challenges, not to mention a useful cult for campaign tie-ins. "The Hunt in Great Allindel" is also rich in atmosphere and options, from the unique characters, to the forest, to the encounters with battlefield aftermaths. Likewise, "The Waiting Room of Yen-Wang-Yeh" is quite complex and really conjures up the Eastern world. It spurred me to develop an Oriental campaign for the first time. And although I'll never use "Out of the Ashes" (much too high level), it was fun to read about Flame's return and the richly evoked locations where very high level characters might adventure. Levels 8-12 actually seems a little low. In any case, a wonderful effort and probably your strongest issue yet.

Wolfgang Baur
Ithaca, New York

(continued on page 37)

BY THE WAYSIDE

BY TIM VILLADEMOROS

An unlikely partnership can be most deadly.

Artwork by Terry Dykstra

Tim Villademoros recently graduated from Terry Parker High School in Jacksonville, Fla. Tim writes, "I first got interested in role-playing games in sixth grade, when my brother needed some quick cash and sold me his D&D® Basic Set for $1.00." He says he wrote this scenario to confront players with an opponent that is not immediately identifiable, whose disguise and tactics are not so ordinary that it would be attacked the moment it approaches.

"By the Wayside" is an AD&D® game adventure for 4-6 characters of 6th-10th level (about 40 total levels). It is set in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® adventure setting (near hex B5-127) but is generic enough to be adapted to other game worlds with little difficulty. A party strong in fighter types is essential to success, as the adventurers' main foes are physically powerful and highly resistant to magic. A druid character would also be of great value, since the entire scenario takes place out of doors.

Adventure Background

The Hool Marshes are not a particularly pleasant place. The creatures that breed in the stagnant pools, as well as the ones that gravitate downward from the mountains and inward from the sea, are of the foulest disposition. All sorts of human vermin inhabit the marshes as well. Smugglers scuttle across the waters during the darkest nights, riding flimsy craft laden with illegal goods. Slavers are constantly on the move, making up their losses in the Amedio Jungle with furtive raids into Keoland and the Yeomanry. The cults of the hated demon-gods Orcus and Dagon have lain the foundations for their secret temples in the dank muck. Criminals and thieves from all the neighboring lands find temporary refuge in the swamp.

The Plar of Hool, who earnestly follows his family's policy of squeezing all it can out of the unproductive land and its people, neglects the patrols necessary to end the menace. Instead, he focuses his efforts on extorting vast sums from the slavers' guild and the smugglers in exchange for his pretended ignorance of their activities. Most other princes look on with indifference, since the region's inhospitality eases their paranoia about invasion by land.

One of the less savory inhabitants of the Hool Marshes is an ancient greenhag

named Agruntha. She has stalked the marshland since long before there were Sea Princes to squabble over who owned it. She inadvertently makes a small contribution toward making her home a nicer place to live by preying on the aforementioned undesirables, who must necessarily travel alone or in small groups to avoid capture. Throughout the centuries, Agruntha has managed to keep her presence and her lair in the northern swamps a secret, and she has fought off all sorts of contenders for her comfortable niche.

Nearly a century and a half ago, however, the horrid hag was confronted with a serious threat to her existence. A crimson death, worried about efforts to track it down in its normal hunting grounds to the south, migrated into Agruntha's territory. Since both monsters sought the same quarry and used the same methods, they were adversaries from the beginning. But the 'death could easily best Agruntha in any confrontation, and the hag recognized this.

After weeks of skulking around and living off swamp lizards, Agruntha finally developed a solution. She tracked down the crimson death and used her *speak with monsters* ability to bargain with it, proposing that they join forces. The greenhag would use her knowledge of magic to lure creatures to the 'death, who could then drain their fluids and leave their dried husks for Agruntha to eat. The 'death, as intelligent as it was wicked, could appreciate the benefits and the brutal economy of such a scheme, and so agreed.

In subsequent years, the local inhabitants (some of whom had caught glimpses of Agruntha that they attributed to bad light and bad liquor) began to sight vague man-shapes in the mists. A legend grew that attributed these sightings to one creature, the Mist Woman, a demon that ate those who ventured out into the swamp alone after dark. The majority of the populace, however, regards these tales as nothing more than stories to keep children from straying where they shouldn't. The creatures continue their predations to this day, reigning supreme in the area while remaining unseen by human eyes.

For the Dungeon Master

Near the lair shared by the two monsters is a small hamlet named Bracken. This village is located on the banks of the Javan River, a few miles from the Keoish border and scant yards from the swamp itself. The settlement is the logical starting place for the adventure. Finding a plausible reason for the party to travel there is not difficult. One of the following should serve admirably:

1. The party meets a traveler who hails from Bracken. Though not exactly affable, he is eager for company and spends the evening with the group. During this time, the traveler makes a joking reference to the Mist Woman legend. He elaborates on the tall tales told around his home in hopes of providing some entertainment. Should the adventurers wish to investigate these stories, he advises against it but grudgingly provides them with the village's location if they are persistent. The traveler cannot accompany the party, however, since he has business elsewhere that is more important than tracking down fairy-tale monsters.

2. If the party is in any of the lands to the northwest of Monmurg, they might hear of employment to be had in that city if they can get there quickly. The shortest route involves riding the Javan River down to the Hool Marshes, then cutting across the swamp. Bracken is the most convenient place for hiring guides to pole the adventurers across.

3. A false treasure map is found in a treasure taken by the party. Since the location shown on the map is close to Bracken village, the only nearby settlement, the PCs will have to stop there to rest, resupply, and hire guides.

4. The adventurers hear of a sizable bounty for the capture of a dangerous criminal. Inquiries turn up a rumor that the criminal was born in Bracken. The next logical course of action would be to travel there, to get background information on the fugitive and to see if he is taking refuge in familiar territory.

The Village

Bracken is a seedy flyspeck of a village, not even big enough to warrant a dot on the map. It is a depressingly drab place, with rundown wooden shacks scattered among the trees and dense foliage. Dirt tracks, infrequently traveled judging from their condition, run in from the east and north. Just beyond the settlement, the impenetrable expanse of the marshes stretches away to the south. During the summer months, the senses are constantly assaulted by the oppressive damp heat, the cries of swamp birds, and the din of swarming insects that fill the air with their humming, buzzing, and chirping. During winter, everything seems lifeless despite the abundant verdure.

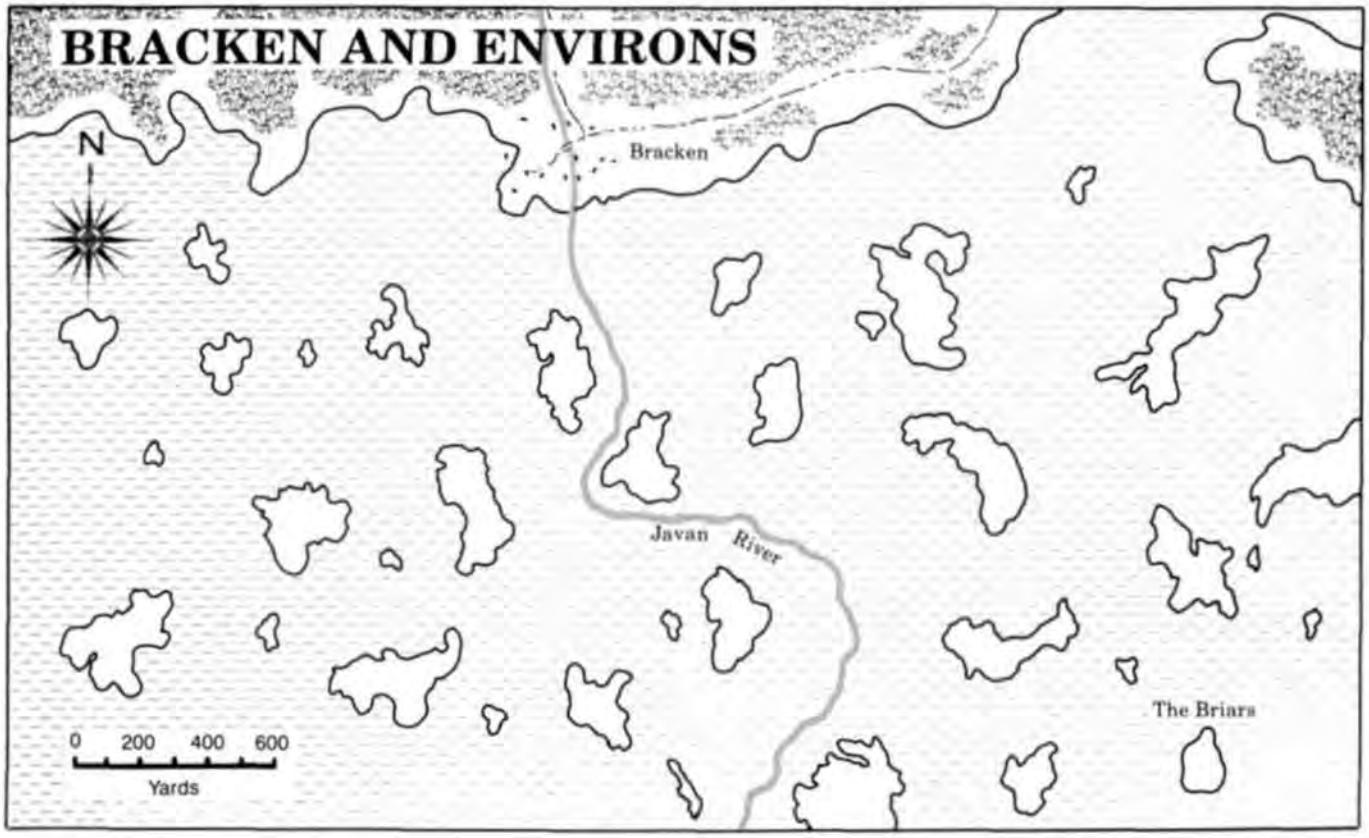
Bracken's proximity to the marsh and to Keoland makes it an ideal watering hole and den for the smugglers, thieves, and cutthroats who make their livelihood out in the swamp. Even the village's honest inhabitants tend to be sullen and taciturn. The locals have an unwritten policy of keeping out of everyone else's affairs (which are likely to involve illegal activities).

From the moment the adventurers enter Bracken, they are under Agruntha's scrutiny. She spends most of her days prowling around the village, using her *invisibility, pass without trace,* and *change self* powers to remain unseen while she spies on the villagers to find out which of them are planning to journey into the swamp. When she notices the party's presence, the greenhag watches them day and night to assess their strengths and weaknesses and to learn of their plans. She is thus privy to all that the PCs say and do unless special precautions are taken.

The hag would like to avoid conflict with the adventurers by lying low until they leave, but she cannot afford to take the chance that they will venture into the swamp and stumble across her lair. This would rob her of the element of surprise she needs to offset their skill and numbers. Agruntha will therefore attempt to lure the PCs into an ambush where she and her ally can overpower them (see "Through the Muck and Mire" for more information).

Rumors

There is virtually no information about Agruntha and the 'death in the village, because no one really believes in the Mist Woman. Anyone who feels otherwise, or who actually gains some sort of proof of her existence, does not live long enough to disseminate this information. If the party gets a poor reaction when speaking with a particular villager, the citizen may decide to have some fun with the PCs by spinning yarns about meeting the creature himself or having a parent, grandparent, sibling, sixth cousin, or dog that has met her. He might also talk about the strange happenings around Tedini's hut (area 5),



implying some sinister connection between the crone and the Mist Woman.

The following areas correspond to the Bracken Village map. All NPCs described in detail here are assumed to have at least a passing knowledge of how to read and write Common.

1. The Gallows Tree Inn and Tavern. This place is a ramshackle, one-story roadside establishment. The rotting wooden roof seems ready to come down on the heads of those within at any time, and the outside walls are in desperate need of a coat of whitewash. Over the entrance hangs a burnished black woodcut sign depicting a corpse hanging from an equally dead tree while several bystanders look on. Below the scene is a legend that reads "The Gallows Tree."

The inn is owned by a man named Penard, who looks to be little more than a collection of old skin and bones hiding behind a greasy and obsequious ear-to-ear grin. Penard was once a smuggler who funneled goods into Monmurg from the northeast. He quit when his age and his enemies began to bear down on him. Using his remaining capital, he opened the inn as a place where he could take it easy in his remaining years and swindle people in a more legitimate fashion.

Penard does little of the real work here; he regards the inn as more of a retirement home than a business. Most of the dirty chores are done by three bruised and haggard local girls in their late teens. Penard's duties consist of greeting guests and keeping his books in good order as insurance against theft by his underlings. The serving wenches do steal from him, since they are grossly underpaid. He keeps any substantial amounts of cash with Captain Turisad (area 2), a longtime associate.

Penard: AC 10; MV 12; T7; hp 24; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg by weapon type; SA backstab (triple damage); PP 30%, OL 10%, F/RT 5%, MS 95%, HS 80%, DN 45%, CW 60%, RL 35%; S 9, D 14, C 13, I 11, W 8, Ch 7; AL LN; *dagger +2*, three throwing daggers; proficiencies: appraising, seamanship (small craft), direction sense, swimming.

Maids (3): AC 10; MV 12; zero-level human; hp 3 (×2), 2; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type; all abilities average; AL N.

The inn is the center of social life (if one can call it such) in Bracken. There are from 11-30 patrons here, drinking themselves silly, at any given time. All of these are typical zero-level villagers with statistics equal to the maids'. While the adventurers are in the common room, check this total each hour to find out how many patrons have entered or left. There is also a 1-in-6 chance that several smugglers (80%) or slavers (20%) (see the Swamp Encounters Table) are present, discussing plans or resting before their next foray into the swamp.

Eating at The Gallows Tree is certain to be an experience not soon forgotten. The menu consists of some of the most unpalatable fare an adventurer is likely ever to come across. All of the food and spirits listed in the 2nd Edition *Players' Handbook* (page 67) are available in the form of swamp cabbage, tubers, watered-down ale, very well-aged meat, and similar inedibles; prices are double those listed. In addition, there are several house specialties that the party members might wish to try (or make a special effort to avoid):

—*Alligator tail.* This is the genuine

article, specially overcooked to suit one's taste, for 3 gp.

—*Black dragon steaks.* Penard passes these off as the real thing in order to justify the outrageous price he charges for them. They are actually alligator tails boiled to leather toughness, then dyed black. They can be had for 18 gp each.

—*Half-ogre's choice.* Penard makes this rancid brew in his cellar. The name comes from his belief that only a half-ogre would be stupid enough to drink it. Adventuresome souls can try their luck for 5 sp a bottle.

The lodgings here are not of the highest quality, but they do keep the party from having to spend the night outdoors with swarms of bloodsucking insects. Inside, they only have Penard to deal with. He bases his room rates on how much he thinks travelers can pay, ranging from 1 sp to 5 gp per person per night. If he gets wind that the party members are adventurers, Penard automatically asks for the highest fee.

Travelers come to the inn only infrequently, and then usually on some illegal business. The inn has 10 rooms, each able to accommodate two people in cramped conditions. Zero-level men and women, who are poor and close mouthed about their affairs, occupy 1-3 of these rooms. At the time of the party's arrival, there are two exceptional NPCs on the guest list, each staying in a separate room.

Rafin is a short man who shows marked Bakluni features and makes tasteless and obscene jokes, no matter what company he is in. He is a thief who makes his living as a professional assassin. A week ago he completed a job involving the murder of a minor lord in Keoland. He is hoping to avoid capture and make it to a port where he can obtain passage on a ship bound for Irongate or the Pomarj. If approached with an offer to join the party, he accepts only if they are planning to travel to Monmurg. He attempts no treachery during the journey; he desires protection from monsters and the authorities more than his companions' valuables.

Rafin: AC 2; MV 12; T9; hp 30; #AT 1; THAC0 16; Dmg by weapon type; SA backstab (quadruple damage); PP 20%, OL 75%, F/RT 45%, MS 95%, HS 95%, DN 25%, CW 90%, RL 0%; S 14, D 17, C 13, I 14, W 11, C 10; AL LE; *leather armor +3, short sword +2, dust of disappearance* (five packets), *medallion of ESP* (30' range); proficiencies: disguise, forgery, land-based riding, jumping, set snares.

Around Rafin's neck hangs a leather bag that holds payment for his last job: eight 1,000-gp diamonds and 20 pp.

Elmeara Olpesh is a handsome young woman with long ash-blond hair. Her manner is quiet though open. Born to a Keoish military officer of small standing, Elmeara manages to possess all of a warrior's skills without the hardened personality that usually accompanies them. She has made a small but well-earned reputation for herself in a few short years.

Elmeara came this way while looking for her onetime partner, a man who stole her share of the money the two had earned in hunting down a pair of troublesome fire giants in the Yeomanry. She lost his trail here and has since given up trying to find him. Elmeara is unwilling to join the party unless they offer her a fixed amount of bonus coinage in addition to equal shares, since she is broke and needs to get back on her feet. She also demands respect and equal status, being understandably proud of her skills, and refuses to risk herself just so one of the party members will not have to stick out his own neck.

Elmeara Olpesh: AC –2; MV 12; F7; hp 57; #AT 3/2 (2 with bow); THAC0 14; Dmg by weapon type; S 12, D 17, C 17, I 9, W 10, Ch 12; AL NG; *battle axe +2, chain mail +1, medium shield +2,* long bow, 20 flight arrows, three *sheaf arrows +2;* proficiencies: hunting, running, animal handling, land-based riding, fire building. Elmeara carries 25 gp and 31 sp in a shoulder bag.

2. Garrison. This squat structure is a collection of ill-fitting stones held in place by crumbling mortar. The flat roof is made of the same material. All windows are narrow and barred with corroded iron. The single entrance is secured by a thick door of iron-bound oak.

This building houses the pitiful complement of men that serves Bracken as a garrison. Twenty-one men live in the building and the chambers below it. Their slovenly condition and lack of training and discipline are enough to make an experienced warrior wince. This deplorable condition is allowed to continue because the local bandits, most of whom live in or operate out of the village anyway, have never had any desire to ransack such a poor settlement.

The garrison commander, Captain Fengran Turisad, is entirely at home in Bracken. His face, misshapen by blows to the point where his nose is almost completely flat and his left eye has been shut permanently, bespeaks of an equally twisted and violent character. His appointment to this post was due more to his skill at money grubbing than any real qualifications. To meet the quotas his superiors set for him, he augments the pitiful tax revenues he collects with bribes from the local criminals. Fengran also engages in a bit of criminal activity himself (other than taking bribes), using the garrison as a safe house to store illegal goods for the smugglers.

Fengran has acquired a toady, one Felloyd by name. Felloyd is a tall, thin man, vicious and opportunistic in all his dealings. While his official rank is that of lieutenant, his function is more closely related to that of errand boy, conveying goods and bribe money to and from Fengran's contacts. He resents but gives no hint of his displeasure; he knows from long association that the captain is ruthless, cold blooded, and deadly to cross.

In a secure room under the garrison, the door to which is sealed with three heavy locks (only Fengran has the keys), the captain keeps his collected wealth. The money is secured in three locked chests, each guarded with acid traps (2-12 hp damage, save vs. paralyzation or be blinded). The first chest contains 4,547 cp; the second, 3,223 sp and 2,103 ep; and the third, 3,122 gp as well as two moonstones, one onyx, and three bloodstones (50, 100, and 50 gp each respectively). A small coffer labelled "Inn Receipts" in Common is unlocked and holds 1,567 cp, 2,183 sp, 889 ep, and 516 gp. Fengran keeps his real wealth in a depository in Monmurg, since here it is vulnerable to theft and inspection by his superiors.

Fengran Turisad: AC 2; MV 12; F8; hp 68; #AT 3/2 (2 with bastard sword or bow); THAC0 13; Dmg by weapon type; SA specialized with bastard sword (+1 to hit/+2 damage); S 17, D 11, C 16, I 13, W 11, Ch 6; AL LE; *bastard sword +2, plate mail +1, potion of extra healing, dagger +2,* long bow, 20 sheaf arrows; proficiencies: gaming, endurance, hunting, swimming.

Felloyd: AC 4; MV 9; F3; hp 20; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; S 14, D 13, C 12, I 8, W 8, Ch 9; AL LE; long sword, chain mail, medium shield; profi-

ciencies: survival (swamp), set snares, animal lore.

Guardsmen (19): AC 5; MV 9; zero-level human; hp 2-5 each; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type; AL LN; halberd, chain mail.

3. Alligator Farm. Situated on the very edge of the swamp is a large two-story building constructed of warped cypress planks. A rail fence surrounding the structure is made from more of the same. Behind the building, a small expanse of land is enclosed with waist-high stone walls. From a break in the fence, a path of relatively flat stepping stones leads through stunted weeds to the front porch steps. On the steps is a metal bucket filled with fish, the odor from which wafts out to greet visitors as they approach. A stout length of chain, padlocked to a heavy stone block, secures a small bull alligator safely out of reach of the path. Spelled out in greasy yellow paint on the reptile's back and sides are the words "Leghera's Lizard Leathers."

This is the residence and place of business of Leghera, the local leatherworker, and her two sons, Yukel and Queslin. Leghera is a fat mass of wrinkles topped by wiry gray hair. Her shrewish disposition is all that her appearance leads one to expect. Her progeny are shaggy brutes not well renowned for their mental capacity. They are protective of and subservient to their mother, speaking as little as possible to strangers.

Leghera has shown a fair bit of resourcefulness in taking advantage of indigenous materials, working as she does in alligator hides. The area in back of the shop is a collection of sunken, water-filled pens holding a total of 16 normal alligators (treated as crocodiles for statistics). Items made from alligator skin reflect their origin in their toughness; they gain saving-throw bonuses of +2 vs. any attack. Leather armor made from alligator skin (20 days for Leghera to make; three suits now ready) is suitable for enchantment up to +1. All goods from her store cost 20 times list price. She has a large assortment available, from sacks to saddles. Unusual items (such as spell components) can be made to order in 1-12 days, depending on size and complexity.

The largest of the pens belongs to Toothsome, a giant alligator. Yukel and Queslin will wrestle him for any visitors who are willing to part with 35 gp each for the privilege of witnessing such an awesome conflict. Since Toothsome is nearly blind (–3 to hit), and the brothers have been putting on such performances for years, there is never any real danger. If actually attacked, however, the alligator is quite deadly.

Leghera: AC 10; MV 12; zero-level human; hp 4; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type; S 8, D 12, C 15, I 15, W 13, Ch 8; AL LN; leather-working knife; proficiencies: leatherworking (four slots), animal lore.

Yukel: AC 8; MV 12; F2; hp 17; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, D 10, C 15, I 7, W 8, Ch 8; AL LN; long sword, knife, alligator-leather armor; proficiencies: leatherworking, animal lore, animal training (alligators).

Queslin: AC 8; MV 12; F4; hp 32; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg by weapon type; S 18/15, D 9, C 16, I 6, W 9, C 9; AL LN; scimitar, alligator-leather armor, knife; proficiencies: leatherworking, hunting, animal lore, animal training (alligators).

Alligators (16): AC 5; MV 6//12; HD 3; hp 21, 19 (×4), 17 (×5), 15 (×3), 14, 12, 11; #AT 2; THAC0 17; Dmg 2-8/1-12; SA surprise 5 in 10 (does not apply to this encounter); AL N; MM1/15 (crocodile).

Toothsome (giant alligator): AC 4; MV 6//12; HD 7; hp 50; #AT 2; THAC0 13 (but –3 to hit due to poor vision); Dmg 3-18/2-20; SA surprise 5 in 10 (does not apply to this encounter); AL N; MM1/15 (giant crocodile).

4. Houses. These substandard dwellings are the homes of Bracken's common citizenry. Building materials include boards, stones, rope, twine, fishing lines, nets, clay, mud, sticks, branches, bones, leaves, sundry bits of leather, scrap metal, barrels, boxes, cart wheels, and anything else that might conceivably keep a structure from caving in. Inhabitants are all zero-level humans, with a 50% chance for each dwelling to house a lone man, a 5% chance for a lone woman, and a 45% chance for a couple (married or not). Single women and couples have a 70% chance to have 1-6 children. Both men and women are combatants with 2-5 hp each. The weapons in each household include 1-4 knives (hunting, kitchen, etc.), a 75% chance for a spear, and a 70% chance for a short bow and 6-36 flight arrows. These people are sullen and secretive.

Citizens: AC 10; MV 12; zero-level human; hp 1-8; #AT 1 (2 with bow); Dmg by weapon type; all abilities average; AL LN, N.

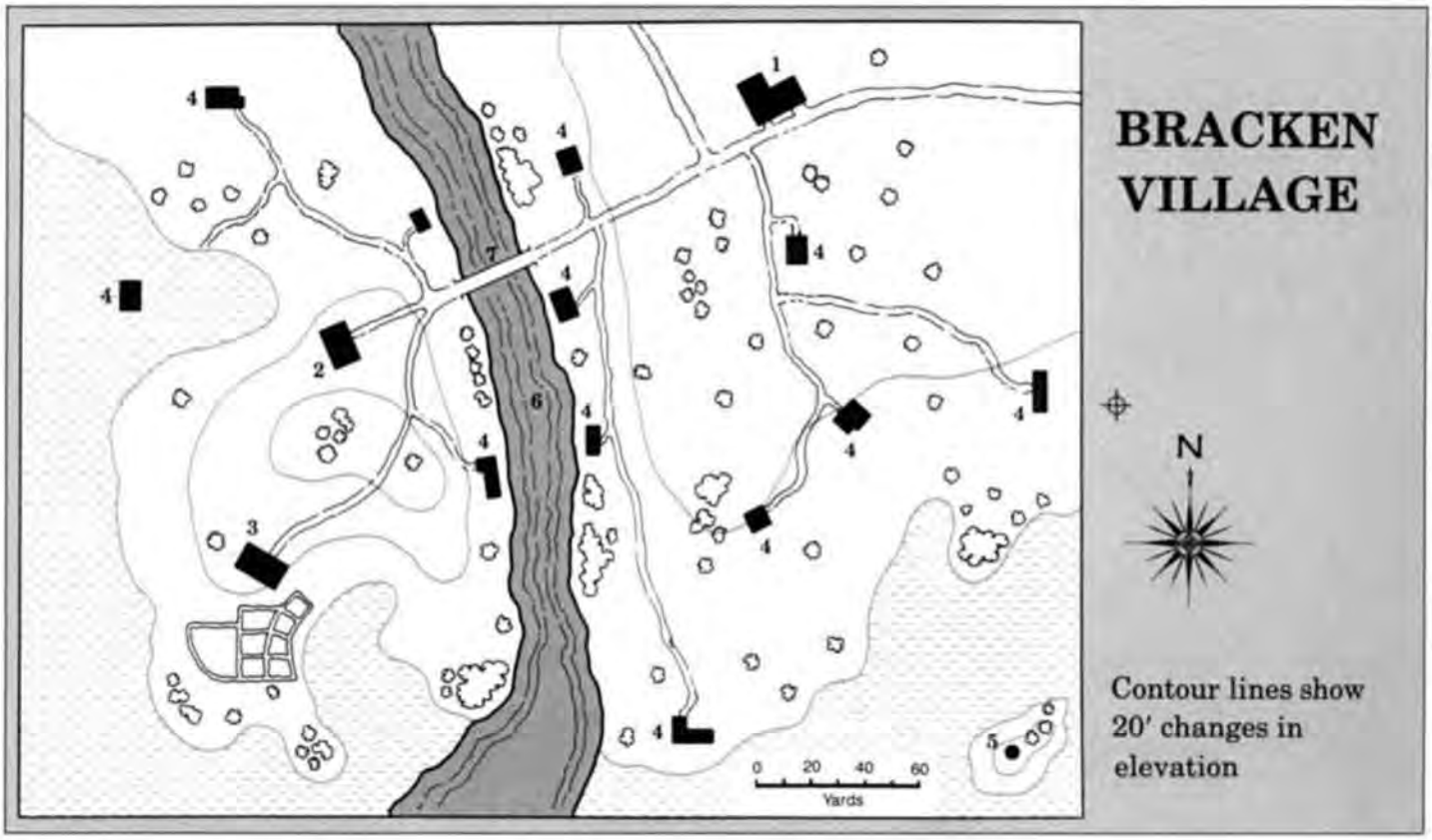
5. Old Woman's Hut. This abode is in even poorer shape than those found elsewhere in the village. It is a tiny, one-room hut made from sticks and mud. A small circle of dirt with a smoldering fire in the middle has been cleared in the front, and the single entrance lacks even so much as a door flap to afford those within some measure of privacy. Inside, there is barely enough room to move. Pots, pans, and bundles of dried plants hang from the ceiling, an obvious peril to anyone foolish enough to stand erect. Shelves mounted on every wall are overloaded with glass and clay jars containing pickled and preserved food. A simple bed of reeds covered with an old sack sits in the middle of this mess.

This hovel belongs to a woman named Tedini. She is well into her sixties, and every year of her age shows in her craggy face; slouching gait; wild, dirty white hair; and gnarled, arthritic hands. She dresses in animal skins and whatever clothing the locals leave unattended on the line on wash day. It requires a great deal of badgering to get Tedini to say anything at all. Usually, all that can be had from her is a long, disgusted stare. When she is stirred to speech, it is usually to flail out with vile expletives and inventive curses.

Tedini's mental state is questionable at best. Years ago, her husband, a thief of small standing, was knifed to death by his associates after a highly successful robbery. Soon after, their young daughter was stolen by slavers. These events, plus the total apathy of the townsfolk and the hermitlike existence she leads, have unbalanced her mind.

Tedini is quite harmless. However, the greenhag Agruntha has found the old woman to be a useful tool in her ongoing campaign of misinformation. The hag plants rumors about Tedini while mixing with the locals in altered form, and uses her spell powers at night to create eerie spectacles in the vicinity of the hut. This, combined with Tedini's misanthropy, theft of loose articles, and days-long excursions into the swamp, have made the locals suspicious and fearful of her. They do not bother her, however, since they fear that she might retaliate with whatever mysterious powers are at her command. The party members might naturally conclude from talk about Tedini that her deranged manner is a ruse designed to conceal evil intentions.

Tedini: AC 10; MV 12; zero-level



human; hp 4; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type; S 5, D 13, C 10, I 8, W 9, Ch 7; AL CN; rusty knife; proficiencies: cooking, pottery, weaving, fire building.

6. The River. The Javan River, clear and swift at its source, is a sluggish, dirty waterway by the time it reaches Bracken. From this point, the river runs through the swamp, eventually emptying into the sea north of Monmurg.

All along the banks of the river here are makeshift docks and pilings at which are moored small craft of every description in various stages of disrepair. These boats belong to the locals, who are apt to be upset if any are stolen. If the adventurers wish, they may hire one or more of the boat owners to convey them across the swamp for a fee of 1 gp per guide per day. Each boat holds two people (including the boat owner) and their gear.

7. Bridge. At this point, a small bridge crosses the river. The short span is constructed entirely from mossy, rotted cypress logs arched high in the middle to allow passage for fishing boats. The bridge, despite its decrepit appearance, is of relatively recent construction (floods or other mishaps necessitate frequent rebuilding) and is thus completely safe to cross.

Through the Muck and Mire

Once the party is in Bracken and reasonably settled, the problem for Agruntha becomes finding a workable scheme for getting them to conveniently march into her trap. Fortunately, she has a great deal of experience in this area, with several tried and true plans.

Her first plan is the one she is proudest of. In this one, she approaches the PCs while posing as a widowed mother searching for her only son, who is lost. No one will be able to confirm or deny her residence in Bracken; as previously stated, the villagers find it healthier not to keep track of their neighbors. If asked where she lives, she shows the party an abandoned shack some distance away from the other buildings, fixed up with stolen items to give it a lived-in look.

A brief search in the area where she reports having last seen the boy turns up recent footprints leading through thick mud out into the swamp. These prints were laid by Agruntha in altered form and lead to her lair. To focus the adventurers' attention away from her, she gives voice to a fear that the Mist Woman might eat her child. If asked what she knows of the legend, she tells a story her grandfather supposedly told her about his having been attacked by the demon when out in the swamp one dark night. According to the story, he narrowly escaped death by hiding under the water and breathing through a reed while his companions were being devoured. If the adventurers allow Agruntha to accompany them (which she insists on doing), she tries to hang back toward the group's spell-casters to make getting at them easier. Should the PCs refuse to allow her to accompany them, she simply follows *invisibly.*

If the greenhag cannot safely implement the first plan (because the party is particularly vigilant, has a *gem of seeing* or some other device that allows detection of potential enemies, etc.), she has another plan. At night, as the PCs sleep in their rooms, she sneaks into the inn while *invisible* and menaces one of the scullery maids with a *dancing lights* will-o-wisp. The girl, thinking this to be the real thing, raises a commotion that

Swamp Encounters Table

1d20	Monster	No. appearing
1-3	Snake	
	1-16 poisonous	1-6
	17-20 constrictor	1-3
4-6	Toad	
	1-13 giant	1-10
	14-20 poisonous	1-8
7	Ghoul*	3-18
8	Leech, giant	1-8
9	Lizard, giant	1-10
10	Will-o-wisp*	1
11	Bat*	51-150
12	Crane, giant	1-3
13	Boobrie	1-2
14	Spider	
	1-12 large	2-12
	13-20 huge	1-8
15	Rat, giant	10-40
16	Wolf	
	1-12 normal	2-16
	13-20 dire	2-8
17-18	Alligator (crocodile)	
	1-12 normal	2-16
	13-20 giant	1-4
19	Smugglers	1-10
20	Slavers	2-16

* Encounter occurs only at night. If this result comes up during the day, reroll creature type.

Alligator: AC 5; MV 6//12; HD 3; #AT 2; THAC0 17; Dmg 2-8/1-12; SA surprise 5 in 10; AL N; MM1/15 (crocodile).

Alligator, giant: AC 4; MV 6//12; HD 7; #AT 2; THAC0 13; Dmg 3-18/2-20; SA surprise 5 in 10; AL N; MM1/15 (giant crocodile).

Bat: AC 8; MV 1/24 (MC:B); HD 1/4; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg nil; SA swarm prevents spell casting/concentration; SD –4 AC bonus while in flight; AL N; MM2/15.

Boobrie: AC 5; MV 15/15 (MC:D); HD 9; #AT 3; THAC0 11; Dmg 1-6/1-6/2-16; SA surprise 5 in 10; SD immune to poison; AL N; MM2/20.

Crane, giant: AC 5; MV 9/9 (MC:C); HD 3; #AT 1; THAC0 11; Dmg 1-10; AL N; MM2/26.

Ghoul: AC 6; MV 9; HD 2; #AT 3; THAC0 19; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA paralyzation; SD immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells; AL CE; MM1/43.

Leech, giant: AC 9; MV 3; HD 1 to 4; #AT 1; THAC0 19-17; Dmg 1-4; SA blood drain (1 point per hit die per round); disease; AL N; MM1/60.

Lizard, giant: AC 5; MV 15; HD 3+1; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 1-8; SA double damage (2-16 hp) on a natural to-hit roll of 20; AL N; MM1/61.

Rat, giant: AC 7; MV 12//6; HD 1/2; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1-3; SA bite has 5% chance to inflict disease (save vs. poison negates); AL N(E); MM1/81.

Slavers: AC 5; MV 9; F1; #AT 1; THAC0 20; DM by weapon type; AL N; chain mail, long sword, dagger, short bow, 20 sheaf arrows. These smugglers are lead by a **6th-level fighter** (AC 3; THAC0 15; splinted mail and shield). Slavers are always interested in obtaining "new meat" and will likely attack the PCs in hopes of capturing and selling them at a high profit. There is a 40% chance that the slavers are leading 4-24 zero-level humans in equal numbers of men, women, and children. The slaves are noncombatants and fettered with manacles and leg chains. The slavers themselves carry 1-6 gp, and the leader has 6-36 gp and 4-40 ep.

Smugglers: AC 8; MV 12; T1-3; #AT 1; THAC0 20-19; Dmg by weapon type; SA thief abilities, backstab (double damage); AL LN; leather armor, dagger, short sword. Smugglers will avoid the party, attacking only if they can strike from behind and the odds are at least two to one in their favor. They have no magical items but might (50% chance) be carrying contraband (normal goods being taken past tariff collectors, paraphernalia of banned religions, human parts for use by necromancers and other interested parties, and similar items) worth 200-1200 gp on the black market.

Snake, constrictor: AC 6; MV 9; HD 3+2; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1/1-3; SA constriction (open doors roll at +1 penalty to escape); AL N; MM2/111.

Snake, poisonous: AC 6; MV 15; HD 2+1; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1; SA poison (save or take 3-12 hp damage); AL N; MM2/111.

Spider, huge: AC 6; MV 18; HD 2+2; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1-6; SA poison (save at +1), leap (MV 3) to attack, surprise 8 in 10; AL N; MM1/90.

Spider, large: AC 8; MV 6*15; HD 1+1; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1; SA poison (save at +2); AL N; MM1/90.

Toad, giant: AC 6; MV 6 (+6 hop); HD 2+4; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 2-8; SA can attack in midair or at end of hop; AL N; MM1/95.

Toad, poisonous: AC 7; MV 6 (+6 hop); HD 2; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 2-5; SA poison (save or die); AL N; MM1/95.

Will-o-wisp: AC –8; MV 18; HD 9; #AT 1; THAC0 11; Dmg 2-16; SD become invisible for 2-8 rounds, immune to all spells except *maze, magic missile,* and *protection from evil;* AL CE; MM1/101.

Wolf, dire: AC 6; MV 18; HD 3+3; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 2-8; AL N(E); MM1/101.

Wolf, normal: AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 2-5; AL N; MM1/101.

wakes everybody up. When the party comes down, Agruntha heads for the swamp, with the idea that the PCs will tag along in anticipation of defeating the will-o-wisp and garnering the treasure such creatures habitually keep. This particular tactic forces the adventurers to act without much preparation; even if they do suspect a trap, they will expect it to be sprung by a different sort of foe.

It is conceivable that neither of these plans will serve Agruntha's purpose. From this point, her measures get much uglier, and the special talents of the crimson death are brought into play. Under cover of darkness, that creature slips into the room of a physically weak character, through cracks and crannies; its near-total immunity to magic makes a spell-caster an ideal target. The character is then attacked (and likely killed, even if there is another character in the room, owing to surprise and the monster's silent, high-damage blood drain). Having roused no one, the monster leaves the way it came.

When it has digested its meal an hour later, the 'death is again ready to fight. Agruntha looks into the PCs' rooms to see if the body has been discovered. If it has, she returns to her home to prepare a defense, leaving it up to the party's resourcefulness to contrive a way to follow. She may need to visit the tavern in disguise to drop hints about the location of the bog, should the PCs lack the means to divine the whereabouts of their assailant.

If the body has not been discovered, she smashes through the window, snatches up the corpse, and leaves the way she came by dropping down to the muddy earth (no falling damage). The adventurers are certain to give chase. As there is no cause to believe the party member is not still alive, Agruntha is reasonably safe from attack at a distance. Also, only the hag will have been seen, leaving the 'death free to deliver a rude surprise.

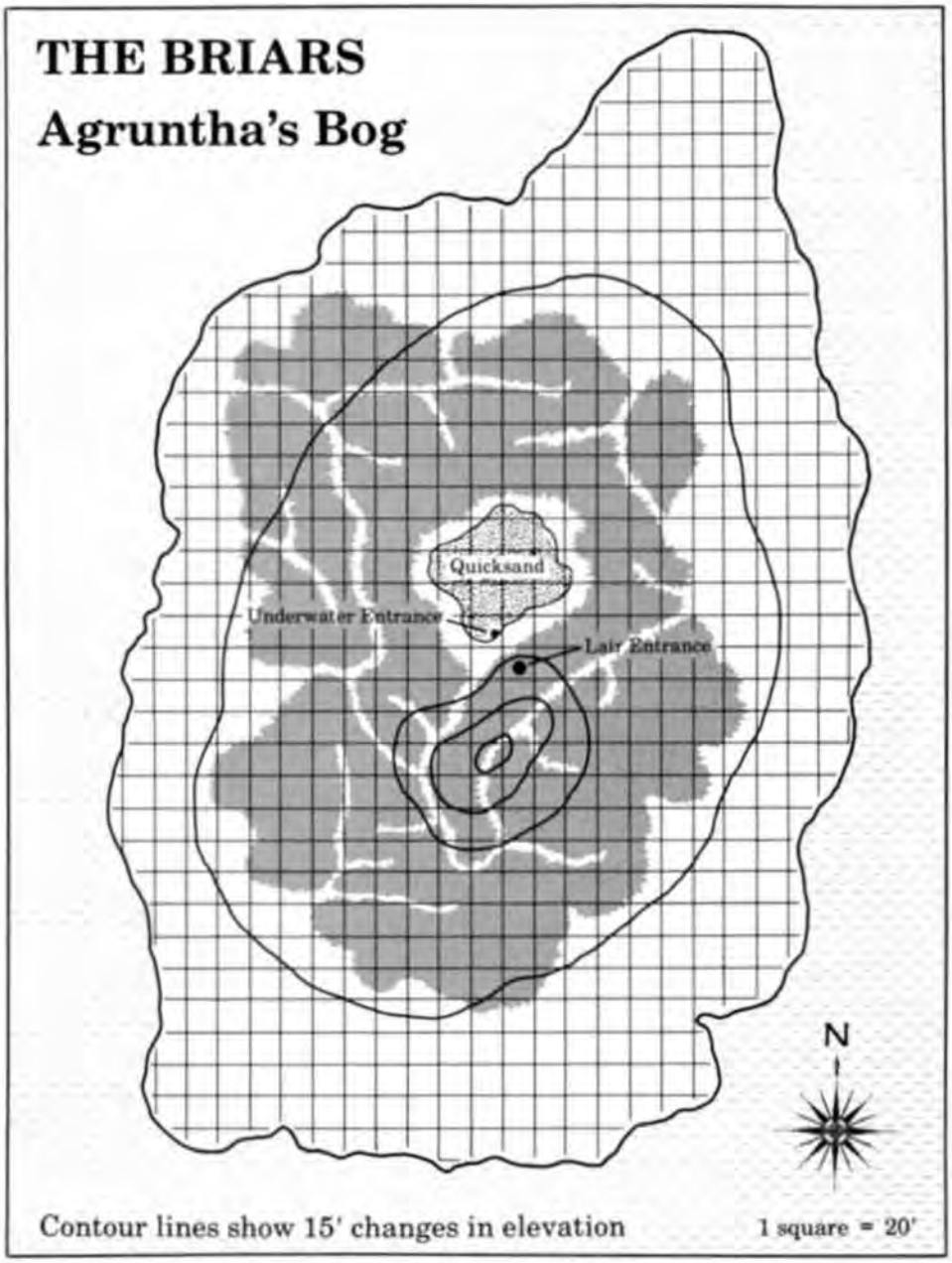
Long-distance travel through the swamp is at a rate of five miles a day (assuming 12 hours a day of travel time). This can be improved to 15 miles a day if the party uses rafts, skiffs, coracles, or barges to negotiate the shallow waterways. Traversing the 1 1/3 miles or so to the hag's lair would thus normally take 3 1/4 hours

on foot or about one hour by boat. However, Agruntha will make her trail as convoluted and confusing as possible, using her various powers of disguise and concealment to lead pursuers around in circles to exhaustion. Thus, travel time to the lair is tripled. Encounters are checked once every four hours, with a 1-in-10 chance that something will be met (see Swamp Encounters Table). Any trip into the swamp, no matter how short, necessitates at least one encounter check. Agruntha moves at her normal rate through the familiar terrain and can easily stay ahead of the PCs, even if they are using boats. If using her third plan, and the PCs possess some means of overtaking her (such as flying), she hides until they abandon the search.

The map titled "Bracken and Environs" shows an archipelago of islands of high ground scattered throughout the marsh. These high areas are laden with standing water, thickets, quicksand, and other hazards, and are often broken up into smaller bits of land, "islands" in their own right. These obstacles make it impossible for the adventurers to improve their rate of travel by island hopping. Islands are logical sites for any additional special encounters the DM might wish to use to expand the adventure. It is recommended that such encounters not be placed in any one spot, since the number of routes the party can take through the swamp insures that most, if not all, set encounters will be bypassed.

After trekking for hours across trackless swamp, the adventurers are not likely to be overawed with their final destination. The greenhag's trail leads to a tangle of gnarled black trees and iron-hard briars that rests on a piece of high ground. These plants are equal to a *wall of thorns* if attempts are made to hack or force a way through them. The damp air makes it impossible to ignite the sickly vegetation, even with magic. Upon careful inspection, the seemingly impregnable mass shows several gaps that might lead inward. It is impossible to determine whether the gaps are natural or the work of some creature. These tunnels are 3' to 5' wide at most, restricting parties to single-file movement.

The middle of this mess is the actual lair. There is but one entrance into this sanctum, exclusive of any efforts by invaders to create other pathways. The ground within the lair is shadowed by the vegetation, even on the brightest



days. At night, the place is black as pitch, except on those evenings when moonlight manages to peek through. The dark earth is strewn with dead leaves and fallen branches. Withered clumps of grass poke up here and there, failures in their attempts to reverse the legacy of decay.

The uneasiness felt at being here is well founded. The entire area is a quicksand bog, undetectable by normal visual inspection. Agruntha has placed some enticing objects at the center of the bog to lure the adventurers in farther (a set of small-size clothing stuffed to look like a child's body, a few worthless bits of brass coins and jewelry, or the corpse of a dead compatriot, depending on which ploy she used to draw them here). These items are placed so that their weight is well distributed, thus preventing them from sinking. The greenhag might also use mimicry and her *audible glamer* spell to enhance the effect.

Should the adventurers start across as a group, all in the first rank fall into the quicksand. Trapped characters will sink like a rock if attired in metal armor, or if they fail to divest themselves of heavy burdens (more than half their weight

allowance). Otherwise, they can tread water indefinitely or swim slowly through the muck to safety (9-12 rounds to reach the edge). The rules given in the *Wilderness Survival Guide* (page 83) for resolving this situation may be used if a different treatment is desired.

Of course, neither the hag nor the crimson death will be idle during this time. When one or more of the PCs begin rescue attempts (necessarily putting away weapons, shields, and other in-hand items to take out ropes, retrieve tree branches, etc.), the 'death flows out of its hiding place in the brambles and attacks from behind, with its full chance for surprise. While the adventurers have their attention on this new threat, the hag slips unseen into the quicksand to finish off those still afloat, initially attacking from behind. She is a natural swimmer and suffers no penalty for fighting in the water. If there are no characters at the surface, she aids the 'death by using her *weakness* spell on a strong fighter before attacking.

The pair is more than prepared for a downturn of their fortunes in battle. The 'death, if reduced to half strength or less (41 hp), backs away at one-third speed until it is in the briars, then flees in earnest. The hag, if the same fate should befall her, dives down into the mud and sneaks out again several rounds later while *invisible*. They then watch from hiding, renewing their assault on the rear of the party when the PCs try to leave through the passages, where there is no room to maneuver. Here, they fight to the bitter end, hoping to edge out the weakened party at the last moment by some bit of luck.

Agruntha (greenhag): AC –2; MV 12//12; HD 9; hp 61; #AT 2; THAC0 11; Dmg 7-8/7-8; SA surprise 8 in 10 (19 in 20 if *invisible*), mimicry, spell powers; SD 90% chance to hide in foliage/move silently, spell powers; AL NE; MM2/71; spell-like powers (at 9th level of ability): *audible glamer, dancing lights, invisibility, pass without trace, change self, speak with monsters, water breathing, weakness.*

Agruntha is a nightmarish old hag with dull green skin, dark olive hair, and feral orange eyes that glow with intensity. Years of living in the briars have scored her iron-hard dermis with numerous sickly, mottled green-black scars. Though she stands only inches taller than the average man, thick, cabled muscles stand out all over her body.

Crimson death: AC 0 (4 after feeding); MV 12 (6 after feeding) MC:B; HD 13; hp 82; #AT 1; THAC0 7; Dmg 3-30; SA surprise 8 in 10 before feeding; SD +2 or better weapon to hit (+1 after feeding), 100% magic resistance; AL NE; MM2/32.

The crimson death is a creature of white vapor, with coal-black spots on its "head" that correspond roughly to eyes and a mouth. It is a ruthless, alien horror that has only one purpose—to feed. It brings to bear the full weight of its extreme intellect and cunning in pursuit of this goal. The monster reverts to its "after feeding" statistics only after it has killed a creature (not merely hit it in combat). It takes six turns to digest a meal, after which it is at full attack ability.

The living space shared by the two monsters is a burrow with two entrances. The one the 'death uses is aboveground a few yards from the central area and covered over by the tenacious undergrowth. A successful roll to detect secret doors while searching in the vicinity gives the entrance's presence away when a breath of dank, fetid air wafts toward the PCs from that direction. The hag's entrance is a hole in the side of the quicksand pit, 15' below the surface, that leads up through the floor of the lair.

Agruntha has been able to make the burrow quite roomy, since the plants' roots lend added support to the earthen walls. The floor is littered with gnawed, yellowed bones as well as a few shrivelled husks of recent victims that have yet to be devoured. Shredded and rotted clothing, rusted weapons, and bits of armor are mixed in liberally. In one corner is a pile of odds and ends that have caught Agruntha's fancy. This collection includes three different sets of unremarkable women's clothing, a Keoish officer's uniform, a set of blood-stained leather armor, a brass key (to her treasure chest), a rusty iron hook attached to a corroded 150' length of heavy chain (used for pulling the chest up to the surface), a necklace of rough amber and polished stones made by swamp tribesmen, the shells of three eblis eggs, a reed flute that is also a fully usable blowgun, and a leaky coracle made from oilskin.

The treasure collected by Agruntha and the 'death rests at the bottom of the bog, about 90' or so below the surface. It is held in a locked, watertight bronzewood sea chest. The greenhag scavenged

this chest from a wrecked ship many years ago when she was living near the coast. The hinges, handles, and inset lock are all fashioned from brass.

Finding the chest will be a difficult task even if the adventurers suspect its presence, since the profusion of decaying matter in the water renders it pitch black to even the strongest illumination. A *locate object* spell would be of great help, provided the caster has some notion of what to look for. Tactile search with hands or probes (such as poles) has a cumulative 5% chance of success per man-turn (checked each turn). A conjured water elemental could find the chest with no trouble at all as well as bring it to the surface, if the party has the wherewithal to go to such extremes. When the hag wants to add or remove something, she hauls the chest to the surface with the chain found in her lair, using a handy tree trunk for leverage.

The chest is not trapped, though it is locked. Contained within are these items:

—986 cp, 2,454 sp, 1,865 ep, and 3,624 gp, all loose.

—A helm of highly polished steel. The crest is in the shape of a kraken throwing its tentacles down in coils to form the eye and nose guards. Set over the eye guards are a pair of green concave crystal lenses. While its probable function may confound the less astute, trained observers will likely guess that this is a *helm of underwater action.* The command word ("ichtedum") is etched into the rear inside of the helm.

—A heavy jade bowl, with three legs in the shape of mermen stoically supporting their burden on well-muscled shoulders. Unfamiliar runes carved in relief on the outside resolve themselves under the scrutiny of a *read magic* spell into prayers to the sea gods Osprem, Xerbo, and Procan. This is a *bowl of commanding water elementals.* The command phrase is "Waters of Life, bathe me" (spoken in any language); it can be found among the invocations.

—A green dragonhide bag, tied securely with thick leather thongs. Inside, wrapped in heavy black felt, is a *crystal ball with telepathy* made from flawless quartz.

—An unadorned bastard sword in an alligator-leather scabbard. If the sword is carefully examined, a faint tracery of runes spells out "Gethul" ("Fire Beast" in ancient Baklunish) on the flat of the blade. Gethul is a *sword +1, flame tongue,* with an intelligence of 13, an ego of 9, and an alignment of lawful neutral. The weapon communicates with its possessor via empathy. It can create a *fire shield* (hot flames) around its wielder and cast a *fire charm* on any creature gazing on its flames. This *fire charm* does not create the penumbra normally associated with that spell; the only sign that it is in operation is a change of the flames' color from red-orange to bright green. Both powers operate at the 12th level of ability, and each is usable once per day. The powers are activated by calling out Gethul's name and concentrating on the desired effect.

Gethul is, for the most part, a cooperative and loyal weapon. However, it does hate trolls of all sorts with an undying passion, since it was created to fight these monsters, and it tends toward the law and order that trolls so despise. In the presence of trolls, the sword sends out waves of hatred to its wielder, urging him to attack. If the sword's wielder attempts to avoid the engagement, a personality conflict results.

—A milky green potion of *fog giant strength* in a warped glass flask. It is identical to a potion of *cloud giant strength* in its effects. However, an alchemist will pay 2,600 gp for it (twice the normal gold-piece value), since he can then replicate it and add its formula to his repertoire. The potion must be sold in a city that is in relative proximity to a swamp or sea coast, where the formula would be of some practical use.

—A steel strongbox of gnomish manufacture. The padlock that normally secures it is missing. This was once the property of a group of thieves, who stole it from a gnome settlement in the Little Hills. They had planned to cross the swamp in order to make good their getaway but unfortunately made this area part of their escape route. The box contains eight platinum ingots (worth 150 pp each), 30 gold rings (worth 50 gp each) on a copper wire, a gnome-sized ceremonial helm made of silver and decorated with black opals and pieces of polished obsidian (worth 8,500 gp), a silver-bladed dagger with a cabochon-cut fire opal set into the butt of its electrum pommel (worth 5,000 gp), and the following gems:

Two 5,00-gp rubies
One 5,000-gp jacinth
Eight 1,000-gp diamonds
Five 500-gp topazes
Five 500-gp aquamarines
Three 500-gp violet garnets
Two 500-gp blue spinels
21 100-gp amethysts
One 100-gp tourmaline
11 50-gp bloodstones
Three 10-gp malachites

If this seems an excessive amount of treasure (as well it might), the DM should reduce it to an amount he feels comfortable with.

If the DM chooses, the name of the gnome clan from which the box was stolen is printed on the outside of the box, forcing lawful and good PCs to attempt to return it to its rightful owners. The gnomes will reward the bearers of their clan treasure with 10% of its total value, paid in gems. In addition, a 4th/4th-level fighter/thief from the clan will attach himself as a henchmen to one of the "great heroes" (who must be good aligned and preferably a warrior or priest), with an initial base loyalty of 100%.

Concluding the Adventure

If the party defeats Agruntha and the crimson death and captures their treasure, several interesting adventure opportunities open up. First are the possibilities, which have already been discussed, concerning the gnomes' treasure. If the DM wishes to expand on this idea, he could assign a mysterious fate to the gnomes, bringing the adventurers in conflict with whatever entity brought about their demise. Second, the sword Gethul is a powerful weapon. Creating a colorful history for the sword (uncovered, perhaps, by spells or the party's bard) could serve as a springboard for future adventures. If neither of these appeal to the DM, Bracken can simply be a lucrative stopover for the party.

If the PC do not defeat Agruntha on their first attempt, they will not get a second chance. The hag prudently picks up her belongings and moves with her associate to safer territory. Restricted to operating within the swamp as she is, she will have little opportunity to avenge her humiliation. However, the intelligence she has gathered on the party through spying on and fighting with them might be of interest to other powerful enemies of the adventures, with whom Agruntha would cooperate wholeheartedly. Ω

THE VANISHING VILLAGE

BY MARCUS L. ROWLAND

Just when you thought it was safe to go back indoors. . . .

Artwork by Bryan Cook

Marcus Rowland has written for most major role-playing game systems. He is currently working on "Canal Priests of Mars," a module for GDW's SPACE 1889™ game. The house hunters that make up "The Vanishing Village" originally appeared in an impromptu AD&D® game Marcus ran for players from the Kings College games club. He would like to thank all those involved. This is Marcus's second appearance in DUNGEON® Adventures.

"The Vanishing Village" is an AD&D encounter for a group of 5-7 characters of 5th-8th level (about 40 total levels). This is a small adventure, a short incident for an ongoing campaign. For this reason, location and background have not been described in detail. Any isolated area is suitable for the events described here. All information, apart from the players' briefing, is for the Dungeon Master only.

For the Players

You've been traveling along an old road through the woods since early morning, and the sun is now setting. Your map doesn't show any villages for another 20 miles, so it looks like you'll need to camp out overnight. As you start to look for a suitable site, the wind shifts and you hear a bell tolling in the distance. Oddly enough, it doesn't sound very far away.

For the Dungeon Master

A group of strange monsters known as house hunters has moved into the area. House hunters are gigantic relatives of mimics, able to imitate cottages and other buildings up to the size of a small inn or temple. The monsters' "skin" is actually a layer of stony shell that acts as armor and also protects these creatures from sunlight; see the detailed description at the end of the adventure for more information.

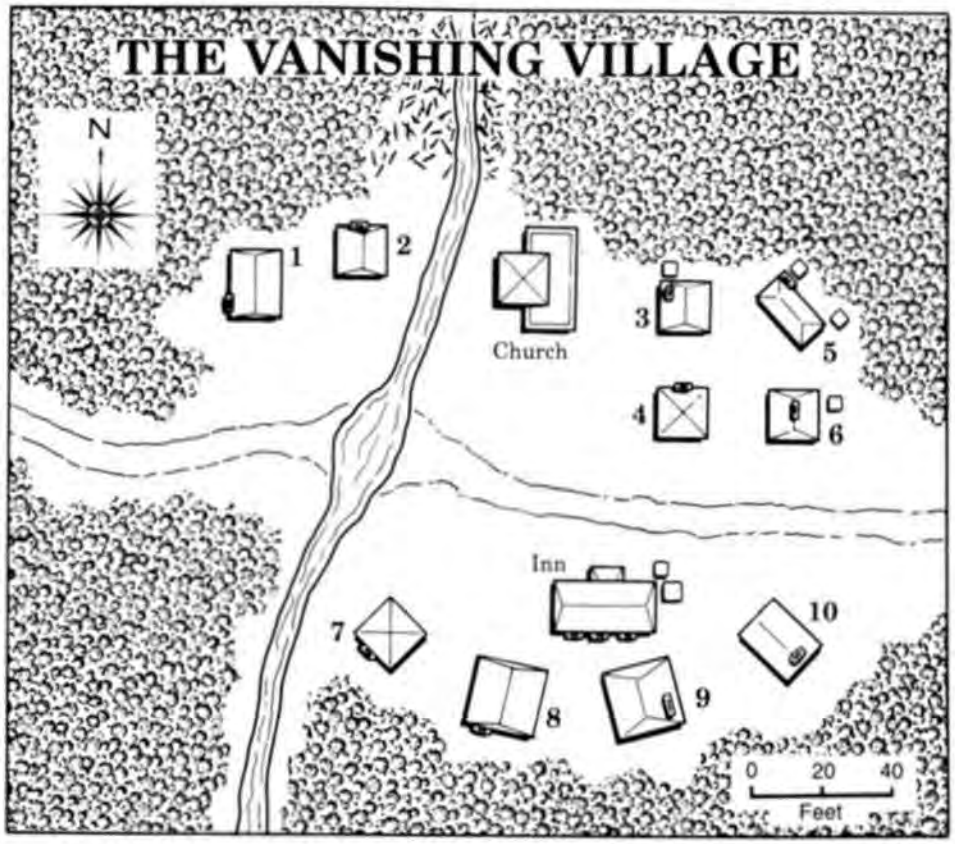
Unlike mimics, house hunters are pack animals. They move slowly and must cooperate to capture their prey. Typically, they find an isolated stretch of road and settle around it to form an imitation village. When travelers enter the "village," the monsters move in for the kill (see the end of the adventure for their attack strategies).

Currently, these house hunters are clustered around the road at a ford about a mile ahead of the PCs. For other settings, you should vary the conditions described. For example, in a desert cam-

paign, the house hunters will cluster around an oasis; in Arctic areas, they pick level ground near a hot spring or glacial stream, shaping themselves to look like log huts or igloos.

The map shows one possible layout for the "village," but you may wish to add more "cottages" for an unusually large or powerful party. There are also a few young house hunters that look like small sheds, outside lavatories, etc. Some of the young monsters are hiding in the woods; the rest are near their parents.

The house hunters have cleared the area around the stream, and there are smashed logs and tree trunks piled along the banks north of the "village." They have roughly flattened the ground, but there hasn't been enough time for grass and bushes to cover the ruts left by these activities. Footing here is uneven, like a plowed field or construction site.



First Approach

As the adventurers near the house hunter "village," they see the spire of a church and some dim lights. Anyone sent in to scout the village discovers that the ground is quite rough. There are glimmers of light around shutters and doors, and muffled voices from the inn. Mention but don't comment on the fact that all the doors and windows are tightly shut, and that there is no one outdoors; let the players draw their own conclusions (that the villagers are hiding from vampires or werewolves, etc.).

The house hunters won't attack a lone scout unless he tries to force a "door" or "shutter" open. If this occurs, take the player concerned aside and run the combat without revealing any details to the other players. Decide what the other characters will see or hear, if anything.

Animals entering the village ahead of the party may be attacked if they get too close to one of the house hunters; this includes familiars and characters in animal form. Run such an incident as for an attack on a lone PC, revealing as little information as possible to the rest of the group. For example, if a familiar is taken by surprise and killed instantly, its wizard is unlikely to have a coherent idea of what happened. There are no birds or small mammals near the village, which may give adventurers a clue that something is wrong.

There is a faint musty smell throughout the village (the odor of the house hunters' slime). The party won't recognize this smell unless the PCs have encountered these monsters before.

The Nightmare Begins

The adventurers will most likely ride to the inn and try to enter. As they knock on the "door," all noise from inside stops and the lights go out. The "inn," an ancient house hunter, then opens its "front door" and attacks:

Ancient house hunter (inn): HD 27; hp 128; #AT 4 (tongue and three tentacles at front); THAC0 –5; Dmg 4-24 (×4). For complete statistics, see the end of this module.

The "inn" is accompanied by its two offspring, in the forms of an outhouse and a stable.

Young house hunter (outhouse): HD 12; hp 32; #AT 3 (tongue and two tentacles at front); THAC0 9; Dmg 2-12 (×3).

Adult house hunter (stable): HD 17, hp 87; #AT 3 (tongue at front, tentacles to either side); THAC0 3; Dmg 3-18 (×3).

The "inn" uses only its tongue at first, in hopes of snaring one adventurer and luring the others close. Its eyes aren't revealed at this stage, but the 54'-long tongue will probably hit something, even at –2 to hit. As the monster attacks, it roars loudly, and the "stables," "cottages," "sheds," and "outhouses" open their eyes a bit (all located on their fronts in the forms of shuttered windows) and start to edge in. They don't move if anyone is near them. Try to run this so that the PCs only gradually realize that the village is closing in on them. The "inn" won't move its shell until it has a real chance of capturing some adventurers.

As the first battle begins, the "church" starts to ring its bell more urgently, which may make the adventurers believe that villagers are trapped inside and are signaling for help. The bell sound, however, is merely an imitated noise.

Ancient house hunter (church): HD 28; hp 164; #AT 5 (tongue and one tentacle at front, and one tentacle on each of the other three sides); THAC0 –5; Dmg 4-24 (×5).

The "church" can move its body back slightly inside its shell, making a cavity large enough for its tongue, a tentacle, and one or two adventurers. Anyone dashing in through the front door is heading for a nasty surprise! The door will shut behind the adventurers to trap them inside.

House Hunters

FREQUENCY: *Rare*
NO. APPEARING: *4-14*
ARMOR CLASS: *0 (shell), 6 (tentacles and tongue)*

	Young	Adult	Ancient
MOVE	*3*	*2*	*1*
HIT DICE	*10-14*	*15-19*	*20-29*
TREASURE TYPE	*Nil*	*J,K,L,M*	*J,K,L,M,N,Q (all ×10); S*
NO. OF ATTACKS	*3*	*3*	*3-6*
THAC0	*11-7*	*5-1*	*1-7*
DAMAGE/ATTACK	*2-12*	*3-18*	*4-24*
SPECIAL ATTACKS	*Mimicry, glue on tongues and tentacles allowing continuous damage, can cause extreme damage, ancient ones may have 4+ attacks per round*		
SPECIAL DEFENSES	*Camouflage, low armor class, resistance to heat and cold*		
MAGIC RESISTANCE	*Standard*		
INTELLIGENCE	*Semi- to Average*		
ALIGNMENT	*Neutral*		
SIZE	*Large*	*Huge*	*Gargantuan*

House hunters are large relatives of mimics. They have lost some of the latter's camouflage versatility but have gained the ability to live aboveground. They form hard shells that look like stone, wood, or thatch. Bony plates cover the shell openings for their mouths and tongues (one tongue each; 2' of length per hit die), huge tentacles (two tentacles each; 1' of length per hit die), and eye stalks (two each; 6" of length per hit die). These bony plates resemble doors and shutters, and are opened and closed by strong muscles resembling those of clams. These plates may be forced open by making normal open-doors rolls.

There is wide variation in the location of these openings. Some of these creatures have them all at their fronts; others have mouths and eyes at their fronts but their tentacles at the left and right sides. Ancient house hunters are likely to have extra limbs, with tentacles on multiple sides.

A house hunter attacks by extruding its tongue and limbs, wrapping the appendages around nearby victims, one appendage per victim. Each appendage makes a to-hit roll at a victim (at –2 if it is striking blindly on that side). A successful hit means the appendage has caught a victim and can constrict it for the given amounts of damage per round. The house hunter's tongues and tentacles are coated with musty-smelling adhesive slime; a successful strength check on 1d20 is needed to break away from an appendage's grip. A victim may either attack the appendage or attempt to pull free of it in a round, but cannot do both at once.

An unresisting opponent is assumed to be dead and dropped after five additional rounds of constriction. Once all opponents have been dealt with, the bodies are picked up by the house hunter's tongue and pulled into its mouth at a rate of one per round. Anyone "playing possum" takes constriction damage one last time, but has one last chance to pull free in that round before being dragged inside. Once inside the creature's mouth, only small, hand-held, stabbing weapons the size of a short sword or smaller may be used to attack (vs. AC 10). If any damage is inflicted, the house hunter uses its tongue to pull the victim out of its shell and constricts until the victim ceases to resist for five rounds, the victim escapes, or the house hunter dies. Bodies are fully digested (and unrecoverable) after 1-4 turns.

It should be noted that the tongue, eye stalks, and tentacles are actually pseudopods. If one is amputated, the house hunter forms a replacement in 1-4 rounds, and all damage done to an appendage is taken from the total hit points of the creature.

The underside of the creature has no armor; it's a slippery foot resembling the foot of a snail, though it is not especially adhesive. When the creature is moving, the outer shell raises slightly to allow movement over open ground, debris, etc.

House hunters aren't damaged by sunlight but don't like to expose their flesh and eyes to it. For this reason, they prefer to move by night and always delay their attacks until night if possible. If they are forced to fight by day, all attacks are at –2 to hit. Their shells are thick enough to reduce fire-, heat-, and cold-based damage by 1 hp per hit die of damage. If damaged below 10 hp, a house hunter pulls in all appendages, shuts all of its openings, and tries to move away from its attackers.

House hunters are pack animals; they cooperate to capture their prey. They have good hearing and can sense the vibration of footsteps out to 120 yards. They are intelligent enough to delay attacking until they can reap the maximum reward. For example, they won't attack a single scout if there is a large party approaching. It is guessed that they communicate among themselves by *telepathy*, to a range of up to 10 miles.

Young house hunters look like small buildings such as outhouses and sheds. They rarely attack until the adults have taken the initiative. Adults are the size of cottages and small houses. Ancient house hunters are larger still, with elaborate shells that can resemble inns, temples, or ruined towers. The reproduction of such creatures is a mystery, though an adult has been seen digging a large hole in the earth with its foot, then depositing its single live young in the hole. The young creature made its way out of the hole, then followed its "mother." Shells apparently grow in size with their owners, and can be shaped over long periods of time to resemble particular buildings that the house hunters have seen.

All three sizes of this monster can produce dim flickering light (bioluminescence resembling candle or lantern light) at any body opening and can imitate domestic noises (muffled voices, clucking hens, the tolling of a temple bell, etc.). Adults and ancients can talk, but only speak a crude form of the common tongue. They will not negotiate for food.

Treasure is usually found inside the shell, either in the creature's stomach or embedded in the shell wall. Such treasure consists of the indigestible remains of the monster's victims, including coins, gems, and similar small items. Treasure may be encysted in layers of shell, like pearls, but these lumps have no jewel value. Occasionally, a magical item or rare antique may be found. A *cursed* item is especially likely, since anyone carrying a really powerful item could fight off a house hunter. Assume that adult house hunters each have a 5% chance to contain a magical item; ancient ones have a 10% chance.

If cleaned out thoroughly, a house hunter's shell can be converted into a crude dwelling.

(continued on page 31)

THE SERPENT'S TOOTH

BY NIGEL D. FINDLEY

In this neighborhood, even the muggers travel in pairs.

Artwork by Valerie Valusek

Nigel writes: "I recently met the younger brother of one of my colleagues, and some of his friends. They're around 17 and avid AD&D® game players. When I told them my name, their response was, 'The Nigel Findley?' Fame at last!"

"The Serpent's Tooth" is an AD&D scenario for 4-8 characters of 3rd-6th level (about 25 total levels). The party can comprise characters of any race, alignment, and class. Players should be experienced in the role-playing aspects of the game. This adventure takes place in the city of Scornubel from the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ campaign set, but the tavern can be located in any port city or town in the DM's game world with little modification.

Adventure Background

There's a saying in Scornubel that runs, "If you're on the docks at night, you're too dumb to live . . . or too tough to die." That aphorism would get nods of agreement in any dock area of any port town in any world.

During a sojourn in Scornubel, the PCs are looking for employment. While passing time at a neighborhood inn (perhaps The Dusty Hoof, #21 on the map of Scornubel on page 75 of the *Cyclopedia of the Realms)*, they are approached by a large and competent-looking man. Though he wears the garb of a merchant—and not a particularly affluent one at that—his bearing and manner almost scream "military," and the short sword at his belt bears signs of the heavy use but scrupulous care given by a veteran campaigner. Although he declines to give his name, he informs the PCs that he has an important and potentially lucrative proposition that he wishes to discuss with them. He invites the PCs to join him for a private conversation in a screened alcove at the back of the tavern. He will say no more until the PCs accompany him and the screen is drawn.

Once they are in private, even the slight pretense of being a merchant is dropped. The man introduces himself as a captain in the Black Guard, a kind of secret police that reports directly to Lady Rhessajan, ruler of Scornubel. If a PC claims no knowledge of any such organization, the man smiles and says, "We wouldn't be doing our job if you *had* heard of us, would we now?" He forestalls any further questions on this subject by pulling out his identification,

which consists of a small scroll showing the official-looking seal of the city. The scroll identifies the bearer as an official emissary of Lady Rhessajan and a captain in the Black Guard. It also gives the captain's code name: Argent.

With his credentials thus established, the stranger launches into his proposition. "There's a tavern down by the docks," he says, "called The Serpent's Tooth, or sometimes just The Snake. It's a real swill hole, a den of iniquity, a haven for smugglers—in other words, your typical dockside tavern. It must serve some kind of purpose; at least, we haven't been ordered to take it out . . . yet." He goes on to explain that it's run by a woman, a former adventurer named Andura. "She's a hard one, Andura is, not someone to take lightly."

Argent goes on to explain that word has reached the Black Guard, "through channels, don't ask how," that Andura has recently been meeting on the sly with certain people ("tough people all, some of them ex-bandits."). Lady Rhessajan, and thus the Guard, are worried that these people are insurgents and that they're planning some kind of insurrection, maybe even a coup. It's obvious that the government needs to know everything there is to know about these people and their plans.

And there's the rub: Andura is hooked into the underworld grapevine and knows the identities of some of the members of the Black Guard. Argent is sure that he himself is known to her. To carry out this mission, he needs new faces, people Andura doesn't know and can't recognize. That's why he has approached the PCs. They're obviously seasoned adventurers, capable of taking care of themselves, and they're new to town. He offers them a short-term commission as deputies in the Black Guard. For the next five days, they are to spy upon Andura and report all that they see and hear about her movements.

If the PCs accept the mission, they'll be paid 100 gp per person per day, with a bonus of 300 gp each on successful completion. The mission is one of information gathering only; no combat is anticipated or desired. The PCs are simply to watch The Serpent's Tooth to find out all they can about Andura's operation—her movements and daily schedule—and, of course, to dig up all possible details on the terrorists she's been meeting. The PCs must report to Argent daily, at a place mutually agreed upon, to pass on what they've learned. The PCs are to be paid half of their salaries each day at these meetings; the rest, plus their bonus, will be paid on completion of the mission (a natural precaution which, as Argent explains, should be sufficient incentive to keep the party from hitting the high road with the government's money). After the PCs have gathered sufficient information, their involvement is at an end; the Black Guard will handle the matter from there.

Argent cannot offer direct help during this mission, because any overt connection between the PCs and the Guard will certainly blow their cover and probably get them killed. He does, however, give them a scroll similar to his, identifying them as deputies temporarily attached to the Black Guard for the period of one week. He accompanies this with a warning not to flash it around. It's evidence of their commission, but if Andura finds out, it could also be their death warrant. "Andura has eyes in many shadows," Argent cautions.

If they accept the commission, Argent pays the PCs half their first day's salary in platinum (10 pp each) and gives them directions to The Serpent's Tooth.

For the Dungeon Master

As is so often the case in matters of intrigue, Argent is a long way from being what he seems. There is no city secret police called the Black Guard (or if there is, Argent doesn't know about it), and the identification scrolls are artful fakes. In addition to these small bits of forgery, he's done his homework and can talk with confidence about the political makeup of Scornubel. His homework doesn't stop there, however.

"Argent" is a *nom de guerre* (the man's real name is Hardrim), and a carefully chosen one at that. There is—or was—a man code-named Argent associated with the government of Scornubel, a spy whose actions (and very existence) were known to only the highest-ranking of the Lady Rhessajan's counsellors . . . and to certain interested outsiders. The real Argent is missing and believed dead, so the new Argent is confident that it's safe to borrow the name.

The new Argent is, in fact, a free-lance assassin hired by a merchant, Therakis of Waterdeep, who is loosely associated with the Six Coffers Market Priakos. Because of harsh treatment his son received at The Serpent's Tooth, Therakis finds Andura's continued existence offensive and is willing to pay handsomely to end that offense. Argent can't carry out his mission without background information and finds the idea of doing his own research unappealing for two good reasons: First, he fears (and with good cause) that Andura will recognize him. Second, he is certain that several of the guild assassins who frequent The Snake will recognize him and do something permanent to forestall his free-lance operation. Rather than risk his own skin, he prefers using innocents to scope out the killing ground for him.

Argent's plan is simple. When the PCs have gathered enough information for him to make the hit, he willingly pays them what he promised—the sum is petty cash compared to what the contract is worth—and takes back the identification he gave them. He then performs the assassination and happily flees to parts unknown, his purse comfortably heavy and his skin intact.

He recognizes that it's quite possible the PCs will run afoul of Andura and her friends and not survive the experience. If so, he'll shed no tears (and save some money), and he'll pull the same ruse with other dupes until he has all the data he needs. It's also possible, though very unlikely, that any confrontation between Andura and the PCs will leave the woman dead. In that case, he'll willingly pay the PCs and leave town, his job done.

Argent's story contains some grains of truth, but not many. It's true that Andura is meeting with people of ill repute, but they have no plans for a coup or any other civil insurrection. Her visitors are old friends from her bandit days, and they're planning nothing more than a wilderness adventure together. They've been drinking wine, telling tales, and talking of old times. Some of these cronies may act secretive, but that's because a couple of them still have prices on their heads from earlier days. All have now gone straight—or at least straighter.

If the PCs ask around to authenticate Argent's story of the Black Guard, they receive varied responses. While nobody recognizes the name of the secret police given by Argent, the majority of people, particularly in the poorer parts of town, are paranoid enough to believe and pass on rumors dealing with shadowy organizations similar to the fictional Black

Guard. Nobody, of course, recognizes the PCs identification scrolls if they should show them, but most people give such identification at least some credence.

If the PCs should attempt to investigate Argent through official channels, they receive absolutely no information from low-level sources. Nobody has ever heard of this Argent or of the Black Guard. If the PCs pursue their investigations to a higher level, however, mentioning the name Argent brings a prompt and categorical denial that such a person exists. A perceptive PC will recognize that the person issuing the denial does know the name, and that it has some significance. This combination of denial and obvious recognition should help to convince the PCs that the man who approached them is just who he says he is.

Argent: AC 3; MV 12; F12; hp 61; #AT 3/2; THAC0 9; Dmg by weapon type; S 12, D 17, C 11, I 14, W 11, Ch 14; AL CE; *bracers of defense AC 6, short sword of sharpness, dagger +3,* garrotte (hidden), 75 pp, 35 gp, 22 sp. Argent has access to additional funds but he does not keep them on his person.

The Snake

For the hard or the foolhardy with time and money (and looking for a place to lose them both), there's The Serpent's Tooth, lovingly known to its regulars as The Snake. It's a tavern in the fine old tradition of the docks: a haven for sailors, smugglers, dealers, cutthroats, uptown failures, and broken-down women of the red lanterns. It's not a place for the unwary, but those who can handle themselves and who are looking for action, intrigue, or danger will find that it's second to none.

The Serpent's Tooth is located on the edge of Scornubel's waterfront, slightly north of the fish market (area 26) on the map of Scornubel in the *Cyclopedia of the Realms,* page 75. Fronting onto Widow's Walk (the north-south road ending at area 26), it is no more than 50' from the water. The area's bad reputation—and the reek from the fish market nearby—are such that only the most hard-bitten types frequent the tavern, even by day. By night, the City Watch patrols the neighborhood in groups of six. Even thieves avoid traveling alone here.

Encounters on the Widow's Walk and in the alley behind the tavern can be determined by using the City/Town Encounter Matrix on page 191 of the 1st Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide,* or the DM can feel free to improvise.

The Serpent's Tooth is an unprepossessing two-story wood-and-stone structure, its few windows securely barred with iron. Its large double doors (always unlocked) open onto Widow's Walk. A smaller door (usually barred) opens onto the alley behind the building. Beside the front door is a bench and a brazier. A smoky, foul-smelling fire burns here at night, providing the only light for that stretch of the Walk. Suspended above the brazier is the tavern's sign. Through the black residue of smoke, a careful observer might just make out a crude painting, badly weathered, of a vicious serpent poised to strike.

The Serpent's Tooth is rumored to be a meeting place for dealers in contraband of all sorts, a guildhouse for mercenaries, a distribution center for drugs and poisons, and an unofficial outpost for the Assassins' Guild. All of these rumors are true to one extent or another; however, such stories always grow in the telling, and PCs asking about the tavern are likely to hear tales even more blood-chilling than the real thing.

At any given time, however, there is probably something unsavory going on at The Serpent's Tooth: a drug deal going down in the alley, a murder being arranged, a recruiter hiring bravos, a smuggler captain choosing a crew, or a prostitute rolling a drunk. Someone looking to make a deal with a gray trader (a fence) or hoping to sign on as a sell-sword would do well to hang around "behind The Snake."

The other widely told rumor of The Serpent's Tooth is that it's not a good place to start trouble. Strangle a sailor in the alley or start a brawl in the street, that's fine; but cause a commotion within the tavern itself, and heads are going to get broken. The wisdom of the streets is, "Troublemakers will be mauled, survivors will be prosecuted" (usually spoken with a nervous laugh).

The City Watch hears these stories as well, of course, but has decided for various reasons to leave The Serpent's Tooth alone (these reasons include threats of immediate retribution from the Assassins' Guild; a yearly stipend—paid by person or persons unknown—to the Watch's commanding officer; and the loss without trace of any troops ever sent to arrest anyone at Andura's tavern).

With no rooms to rent like an inn, The Serpent's Tooth is purely a tavern, serving ale, wine, mead, brandy, and a rotgut liquor purported to be whiskey. The quality of the drinks served is uniformly bad unless the customer asks for "special stock." Then, if the bartender is feeling accommodating—and the customer is willing to pay the price—ale, wine, mead, and brandy of acceptable (although still not high) quality can be had. Normal and special-stock drinks are equally potent; the main difference is that the normal varieties tend to produce brain-numbing hangovers. There is no special-stock whiskey; it is all foul.

Ale is served in tar-sealed wooden tankards holding one pint each. Wine, mead, and brandy are served in battered six-ounce pewter cups. Whiskey is served in two-ounce pewter shot glasses. Brandy, mead, and wine can also be bought in earthenware bottles, each holding five cups and costing four times the per-cup price. Prices at The Serpent's Tooth are:

Beverage	Normal	Special stock
Ale, tankard	1 sp	5 sp
Brandy, cup	15 sp	35 sp
Mead, cup	10 sp	30 sp
Whiskey, shot	10 sp	n/a
Wine, cup	5 sp	10 sp

Food is also available, although the selection is limited to ploughman's lunch (stale fruit and questionable cheese) for 10 cp, greasy fried fish for 15 cp, and sausages of doubtful ancestry for 20 cp. All entrees are served with a small loaf of gritty black bread (available alone for 5 cp). If asked about the lack of good food, anybody in the tavern will probably answer, "This is a bar. You want a banquet, go to the palace."

There are no serving girls or barmaids in The Serpent's Tooth. Customers must go up to the bar to place and collect their orders and must hand over cash before receiving anything. Food orders, too, are placed with the bartender. Service is far from quick; for nonregulars, it is often so slow as to be insulting.

It is an unwritten law of The Snake that customers cannot linger over a drink for more than 45 minutes without ordering another. If someone tries to procrastinate, the bartender hurls insults until the customer buys another drink or leaves (the regulars usually join in the abuse with great glee).

If the PCs spend much time drinking

in the tavern, the DM should keep close track of their progressive drunkenness (see the Intoxication Tables on pages 82 and 83 of the 1st Edition *DMG*).

Andura and Friends

Andura: AC 0; MV 12; F8/T6; hp 55; #AT 3/2 (3 with darts); THAC0 13; Dmg by weapon type; S 17, D 16, C 12, I 15, W 13, Ch 15; PP 50%, OL 46%, FT 39%, MS 41%, HS 32%, DN 17%, CW 83%, RL 27%; AL CN. She wears *bracers of defense AC 2* and a *ring of spell turning*. Andura keeps a *broad sword +3* and carries a *dagger of venom*, six darts, a hip flask of excellent brandy, 42 pp, a star sapphire pendant (worth 600 gp), and a set of keys (to the tavern front doors; the desks in rooms 10 and 12; the doors to rooms 11, 13, 15, 16, 21, 25, and 27; the dresser in room 13; the chests in room 16; and the trapdoor in room 24).

Andura is an attractive, dark-haired woman who looks younger than her 38 years. She was born and raised the daughter of a wealthy businessman in the city of Arabel in Cormyr but always followed the example of her older brother rather than the orders of her parents. When she came of age and realized that the only future awaiting her at home was an arranged marriage and a life as decorative hostess for a younger version of her father, she ran away and joined a ragtag group of adventurers and opportunists she met on the road. Before long, her business acumen (learned from her father) and her own competence and drive earned her leadership of the group. For several years, in defiance of Cormyr's edicts against lawless freeswords, she and her comrades sold their services to anyone who would pay, working as bodyguards, escorts, and sometimes bandits. Their travels took them far and wide across the Realms, and many villagers and crofters still tell "The Tales of Andura's Band" around the evening fire.

Eventually, Andura decided that it was time to settle down—not in the way her father had intended, of course, but as a businesswoman in her own right. It was time to let the money come to her for a change. After disbanding her group near Scornubel, she bought and renovated an abandoned waterfront building in that city and opened her tavern. Even through The Serpent's Tooth is seen as a den of iniquity, Andura herself is not evil. As befits her chaotic-neutral alignment, she doesn't encourage what goes on in her tavern; she just doesn't stop it. "Everyone has the right to go to hell in his own way," she's been heard to say. "Who am I tell others what to do?"

Andura is an excellent businesswoman, keeping tight control of the tavern's finances. As befits someone of her importance, she is difficult to see on business. Sometimes, however, she does wander down into the barroom to check things out.

Andura is intelligent, with an abiding love for books and chess, and is a good speaker, although her dry wit is often too cutting for her own good. If given an opportunity for a verbal jab, she usually takes it, even at the cost of alienating someone valuable. She does have a conscience, no matter how much she tries to hide it, but the gods help anyone who tries to play on it.

Despite rumors to the contrary, Andura does not collect a cut of major deals made on her premises. She is enough of a realist to know, however, that if she tried to stop the deals, the very least she would lose would be her business. To uphold her tough reputation, she lets it be thought that she bribes the City Watch to stay away from The Serpent's Tooth. Actually, she knows that it is the Thieves' Guild that pays the protection money.

Andura's only confidants are her friend Renaldo—once a member of her band and her lover—and her lieutenant, Gralnakh Longtooth. Both would die rather than betray her confidences.

Gralnakh Longtooth: AC 5; F7/T3; hp 50; #AT 3/2; THAC0 14; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, D 13, C 15, I 15, W 12, Ch 12; PP 33%, OL 37%, FT 30%, MS 18%, HS 12%, DN 20%, CW 90%, RL nil; AL CN. Gralnakh wears a *ring of protection +2* and ring mail under his jerkin. He keeps a club behind the bar and carries two daggers, a hip flask of good whiskey, a tinderbox, a pipe and tobacco pouch, 15 gp, 50 sp, and a set of keys (to the front doors; the desk in room 12; the doors to rooms 16, 21, and 25; the chests in room 16 and 17; the trapdoor in room 24; and the box in room 26).

Gralnakh, a half-orc ("Gral" to the regulars), serves as head bartender of The Serpent's Tooth. He looks like a typical half-orc—swarthy, tough, and ugly—and when he's on duty he talks and acts really mean and nasty. Actually, Gral is one of those lucky half-orcs who gained much from his human parent. He's intelligent and, beneath his surly facade, very cultured. He enjoys philosophical conversations and chess games with Andura (he beats her most of the time), and has an appreciation for the finer things in life.

Gral plays the ugly half-orc role to the hilt when he's in public for several reasons: It's what people expect of a half-orc, and it's easier to play along with a stereotype than to change one. More important, it helps keep trouble in the bar to a minimum. Gral can often talk down any trouble that's developing (usually obstreperous drunks) simply by showing his club over the top of the bar and saying quietly, "You'll find yourself out in the alley, and we'll tell the Watch you fainted."

Gralnakh was born as a result of an orc raid from the Far Hills on some villages near Hluthvar. As is their way, the orcs raped and pillaged through the countryside, then returned to their lairs when met with determined resistance. Gral's mother bore her son but died in childbirth, leaving him alone in an environment understandably hostile to anything orclike. He was raised by the village's cleric, an aged devotee of Chauntea, who protected Gral as much

as he could. When Gral was 13, the cleric died and Gral fled the village to eke out a living in the forest near the River Reaching. He soon fell in with a bandit group in need of additional muscle, and it was they who taught him his skills in the killing and thieving trades.

When his group crossed paths with Andura's band, he was attracted to the raven-haired leader and abandoned his erstwhile comrades to throw in his lot with her. Andura immediately recognized his considerable abilities, and Gralnakh soon earned a place as her right-hand man. He has served her ever since with unshakable loyalty, and his hardship-honed intelligence has stood her in good stead on many occasions.

Andura looks on Gral as one of her two closest friends. From his side, however, there is more to the relationship. From the moment he laid eyes on her, the half-orc has been madly in love with the dark-haired beauty. He's never admitted this to anyone, least of all Andura herself, but his emotions color all his thoughts and actions. He's never taken a wife, although he has a purely physical relationship with the half-orc cook and scullery maid named Darg.

Another close friend of Andura who spends inordinate amounts of time around the tavern (although he's not an employee) is a bard.

Renaldo the Lyrist: AC 6; MV 12; B6; hp 25; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, D 16, C 12, I 13, W 15, Ch 16; PP 55%, DN 20%, CW 90%, RL 30%; legend lore/item knowledge 30%; AL CN; as per 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*, pages 41-44. Renaldo wears leather armor and carries a *long sword +1;* two daggers; three darts; a lute; a flute; pen, ink, and parchment; a pipe, tobacco pouch, and tinderbox; a mage's scroll (*charm person, hold portal, scare);* a potion of *sweet water;* a pouch containing itching powder; 20 pp, 40 gp, 25 sp, and 20 cp; a ruby ring (worth 500 gp); and a ruby ear stud (worth 150 gp). His currently memorized spells are *detect magic, message, sleep, deeppockets,* and *knock.*

Renaldo is a striking figure, tall and very handsome, with long blond hair, cornflower-blue eyes, and a neatly trimmed beard. He usually wears a jerkin and cloak of kelly green (over his mail) and a broad-brimmed hat with a red plume. His behavior is courtly in the extreme, showing both his bardic training and his upper-class roots.

Although he is a lutist, singer, and poet of great skill, Renaldo is free of the arrogance that often comes with talent. He is irresistible to women (and vice versa). With his dashing appearance and courtly manners, Renaldo looks out of place at The Serpent's Tooth and is, in fact, welcome at fine inns and boudoirs throughout the city. He frequents The Snake mainly because of its owner.

In the entire world, Renaldo feels loyalty only to Andura. In his youth, he was a member of her band and loved her wholeheartedly. They grew apart as her desire to settle down developed, totally at odds with his freebooting soul. They are still the strongest of friends, however, and share a great love of chess, often playing a hard-fought game over a flask of wine.

Renaldo's prime characteristics are a mercurial sense of humor and a great love of practical jokes. These are always more embarrassing than harmful (for example, sneeze-producing pepper sprinkled on a courtesan's veil, or *oil of slipperiness* applied to the soles of a drunken warrior's boots) and are never directed against a comrade.

Bubba: AC 10; MV 12; F5; hp 51; #AT 1; THAC0 16; Dmg by weapon type; S 18/00, D 10, C 17, I 5, W 6, Ch 8; AL N.

The tavern's bouncer, Bubba, is a huge young man, an ex-mercenary with a broad but empty grin. His only weapon is a large club slung on his belt, but he rarely has to use it.

Bubba's low intelligence (similar to that of a four-year-old child) was caused by a run-in with a horse that kicked him in the head. When he woke from his trauma-induced coma, he set out to redress the balance by engaging in fisticuffs with every horse he saw. Needless to say, Bubba reigned undefeated in these bouts. Andura, who was looking for a suitable bouncer at the time, heard about his escapades and paid for his release from jail (where animal lovers and not a few ex-horse-owners had arranged for Bubba to reside). He's been on Andura's payroll for almost two years and serves her with an unshakable and unquestioning loyalty.

Bubba's antipathy toward horses remains. If he meets someone with a horse emblem on a shield, or something else emblazoned with an equine symbol, Bubba is quite likely to put his fist through the object. For this reason, Andura rarely lets him stray from within the tavern building.

Bubba is an effective bouncer, not only because of his size, but also because of the combat tricks and infighting skills Gral has taught him, further improving the warrior's skills he had earned before he was kicked. Bubba doesn't start trouble, but if Gral or Andura tells him to beat on someone, he will attack until that person stops moving or until he's called off. Throughout any altercation, Bubba's beatific smile remains in place, and he has a tendency to chuckle like a child. He can't be bribed easily since he doesn't understand the value of money. People have tried bribing him with candy, and he always takes it if offered, but such gifts never stop him from carrying out orders.

Bubba can usually be seen standing against the wall by the bar, playing with a heavily dented helmet (a trophy he took from a patron who had no further use for it). The common description of Bubba among habitues of The Snake is, "strong like an ox, smart like a hay wagon." One of Gralnakh's most effective comments to stop trouble is, "Any more of that and you'll have to speak to Bubba."

The Adventurers

Most of Andura's friends—the people who Argent has claimed are insurgents—are generally going about their business in town, purchasing supplies for their upcoming treasure-hunting excursion to the Sunrise Mountains. As Andura, Gral, and Renaldo have not yet decided to join the party, three of the adventurers visit The Snake from time to time to lobby for their participation. These three are Daland, Celegon Moonshadow, and Liramar Deepdelf. All three have lodging at Thruu's Way Rooms and Dining (#41 on the map of Scornubel on page 75 of the *Cyclopedia of the Realms).*

Daland of Waterdeep: AC 5; MV 9; F6; hp 46; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, D 13, C 15, I 13, W 11, Ch 13; AL CN. Daland is a human male of about 30 years. He typically wears chain mail under a dusty traveling cloak and carries a light crossbow, two dozen quarrels, a long sword, a flask of whiskey, 35 pp, 20 gp, 10 sp, and no fewer than four daggers concealed about his person. Among friends (and only among friends) his nickname is Scar, thanks to a memento that an ogre chieftain's love tap left across his right brow.

Daland's demeanor is that of a typical

adventuring freebooter, but this disguises a deep-running sense of superstition. When he served with Andura's band, her skill always brought them back alive. Now he feels that the Sunrise Mountains expedition will be ill-fated unless Andura comes along. As with all of Andura's old comrades, loyalty and friendship to the band runs deep in Daland. There is a bounty on Daland's head (1,500 gp dead, twice that alive), placed by a minor merchant of Waterdeep, so he tends to keep his face and scar concealed.

Celegon Moonshadow: AC 8; MV 12; F7/M4; hp 51; #AT 3/2 (2 with bow, 3 with darts); THAC0 14; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 12, D 14, C 10, I 16, W 14, Ch 16; AL CG. Celegon is a young and attractive elf. He wears leather armor and carries a wand of *magic missiles*, a scroll (*lightning bolt*), a *dagger +2*, his traveling spell book, spell components, a long sword, a long bow, a dozen arrows, three darts, a flask of fine wine, and a money pouch containing 10 pp, 33 gp, and 30 cp. Around his brow is a platinum circlet bearing a moonstone (worth 200 gp for the gem alone, 300 gp for the entire circlet) that identifies him as the third son of an unconventional elven family, the Moonshadows. His spells include *burning hands, dancing lights, read magic, pyrotechnics*, and *ray of enfeeblement*.

Like most elves, Celegon's interest in adventuring lies more in the joy of discovery and the satisfaction of curiosity than in the collection of loot. Though he, too, traveled with Andura's band for a time and feels loyalty toward her, he feels even greater friendship toward Renaldo. Celegon's wit is more subtle than the bard's, turning more to wordplay and riddles, but he is drawn to Renaldo's sense of humor.

Liramar Deepdelf: AC 4; MV 12; T4/I5; hp 27; #AT 1 (3 with darts); THAC0 19; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 10, D 17, C 10, I 15, W 10, Ch 10; PP 45%, OL 42%, FT 45%, MS 38%, HS 30%, HN 25%, CW 70%, RL 20%; AL CN. Liramar is a young but well-traveled gnome. She wears *leather armor +1* and carries a short sword, a *dagger +1*, three darts, her traveling spell book, spell components, and a money pouch containing 40 pp, 31 gp, 35 sp, and a 100-gp turquoise. Her spells include *audible glamer, color spray, detect magic, phantasmal force, wall of fog, improved phantasmal force, misdirection, web, illusionary script*, and *suggestion*.

Liramar's goal in life is to accrue enough of a fortune to be able to return to her clan and buy a position in the upper classes (a place she is not entitled to by her lowly birth). She joined Andura's band with the sole purpose of making lots of money but soon had to admit a grudging respect and affection for her comrades. It is she who will lead the upcoming adventure if Andura declines, but Liramar is enough of a realist to know that their chances would be improved if Andura headed the expedition. Like Daland, Liramar has a price on her head (1,000 gp, dead or alive), placed by the adventuring company Halfling Inc. She interrupted one of their con games with one of her own.

If approached by the PCs, none of these adventurers will admit their purposes or discuss their relationships with Andura. Camaraderie runs strong among Andura's associates; if they feel that a stranger is prying into their affairs, they are quite likely to rebuff him—with violence if necessary.

And Another

Someone else with a deep and abiding interest in Andura is a young man named Stront, the son of the merchant who hired Argent.

Stront: AC 10; MV 12; T3; hp 9; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg by weapon type; S 10, D 13, C 10, I 10, W 6, Ch 10; PP 37%, OL 32%, FT 28%, MS 26%, HS 18%, HN 15%, CW 84%, RL nil; AL CN. Stront carries a dagger plus a pouch containing 10 gp, 25 sp, and 20 cp. He has no thief's kit (he pawned it for drinking money).

Stront is (or was) a thief. More than a year ago he tried his hand at taking The Serpent's Tooth for some of the wealth rumored to rest within its walls. Even then he was a drinker, and the false courage with which he fortified himself before the attempt played him false. Andura herself caught him rummaging through her private possessions and decided to take justice into her own hands. She locked him away in the cellar of The Snake and kept him in solitary confinement for more than a year. When she finally showed mercy and released him, she told him his head would be forfeit if he ever showed his face around Scornubel again. He's never been himself since. Although he's still young in years, he's grown old in spirit.

Stront took to drink quite strongly and has rarely been sober in the four months since his release (for game purposes, treat him as "moderately intoxicated" as per the 1st Edition *DMG*, pages 82-83). Now, fired by vengeance and fortified by quantities of brandy, he's returned to Scornubel to confront Andura.

On the third evening after Argent hires the PCs (or on the first subsequent evening that the PCs are present to witness events), Stront appears at The Serpent's Tooth. He staggers up to the bar and orders a drink. Gral recognizes him and offers him a quiet warning to take his business elsewhere, but Stront is in no mood for warnings. He roars, "I've got the right to be served anywhere, you bloody half-breed!" Gral smiles in a way that would make a sober man rethink his statement and reaches below the bar for his club.

Just then Andura appears in the barroom. "Hold!" she snaps, and Gral stops. She looks at Stront and says, "I told you, Stront. Four months ago, I told you. Step back inside my tavern, and I'd feel justified in taking your head."

Stront starts hurling abuse, talking about vengeance striking Andura from a clear sky (he knows that Therakis is planning some retribution for the imprisonment of his son but doesn't know about Argent or the PCs). Andura has no patience for abuse. She points to Stront and calls, "Bubba—out!"

As Bubba descends on Stront, who's drunk enough to try to fight, the PCs have decisions to make. Are they going to get involved? If so, on whose side? Helping the bouncer won't make any impression on Bubba, Andura, or Gral. Helping Stront, however, will get the PCs on his good side and on the bad side of everybody else. No matter what the PCs decide, Gral and Andura will help with the expulsion of Stront if things get sticky. No other tavern patrons will get involved.

If the PCs get Stront out of the tavern in one piece, or if they talk to him outside as he's regaining his senses, he tells them a greatly modified version of his tale—a version in which he's an innocent victim. With little urging, he's willing to tell them something about the layout of The Snake's upper floor, but he'll get many of the details hopelessly wrong. The only area on which he'll be 100% correct is his old prison cell (room 27 in the cellar).

Stront is unwilling to help the PCs

directly; adrenalin has sobered him enough that he now knows he should fear Andura. Information—and doubtful information, at that—is the only assistance he can offer. If the PCs recount Argent's story about insurgents, he enthusiastically confirms it (he always suspected Andura was mixed up with enemies of the realm), but that's just his bitterness talking.

If the PCs decide not to interfere, Bubba beats Stront senseless and ejects him from the tavern. The fracas remains the subject of barroom conversation for several days afterward. In either case, Stront has the wisdom to leave Scornubel the next morning and never return.

Events

During the time that the PCs frequent the tavern, very little out of the ordinary happens. The bar sells food and liquor. Intoxicated sailors fight in the street. Drunks are rolled in the alley. Perhaps an affluent merchant is knifed and relieved of his purse near the stable. In other words, business as usual.

The specific events that transpire during the few days of the PCs' mission are as follows:

Day 1: Argent approaches and recruits the PCs.

Day 2, 7:30 P.M.: Liramar and Daland arrive at the tavern and are immediately escorted upstairs by Andura to her private office (room 10).

Day 2, 11:45 P.M.: After an evening of conversation and fine liquors, Liramar and Daland return to their lodgings.

Day 3, 9:00 P.M.: Daland arrives at the tavern. Renaldo joins him over drinks in the barroom.

Day 3, 9:45 P.M.: Liramar arrives and joins Daland and Renaldo.

Day 3, 10:00 P.M.: Celegon arrives. Renaldo takes them all upstairs to Andura's private office.

Day 3, 10:15 P.M.: Stront makes his appearance at the tavern (see "And Another") and shortly thereafter takes his leave. If the PCs are not present at this time, the DM should reschedule Stront's abrupt arrival—and even more abrupt departure—so that the PCs can witness it.

Day 3, 11:45 P.M.: Celegon, Liramar, and Daland leave.

Day 4, 2:30 P.M.: Daland arrives and drinks alone, as if waiting for someone.

Day 4, 3:45 P.M.: Daland leaves (he was waiting for Celegon, who was unable to make the rendezvous because of errands he had to run).

Day 5, 8:30 P.M.: Liramar, Daland, and Celegon arrive and drink silently at a table. Daland seems nervous (this is the day on which Andura will give her final answer as to whether she will join the expedition).

Day 5, 9:00 P.M.: Andura comes downstairs and ushers the others up to her office.

Day 5, 10:30 P.M.: Liramar, Daland, Celegon, and Renaldo come downstairs. Liramar seems slightly angry; Daland is distressed (Andura has finally declined to join the expedition). Renaldo quietly consoles them at the tavern door, then shakes hands all around. The adventurers leave. Renaldo goes back upstairs.

After Day 5, Liramar, Daland, and Celegon do not return to the tavern. They and their comrades leave for the Sunrise Mountains early in the morning of Day 6.

The DM should feel free to reschedule

these events to match the pace of the PCs' investigations.

The Investigation

The PCs will probably begin their mission by staking out The Serpent's Tooth and spending time in the barroom. If they do so and are not careful about disguising their intentions, the bar staff and regular patrons notice them and draw their own conclusions.

The first to notice them is Renaldo, who is fascinated by people and is very observant. If the PCs appear overly curious, he assumes they are planning some kind of mischief. He isn't the kind to start trouble—although he often proves a willing participant if somebody else starts it—so his approach is to join the PCs and ask if there's anything he can help them with. "I noticed your interest in The Snake," he says in a friendly manner. "That's all well and good. But I should tell you this: The Snake isn't a good place to try anything. A word to the wise, eh?" And with that, he leaves.

There are other habitués of The Snake with their own reasons for interest in the PCs activities. One of these is the dwarf Graywand (a pseudonym; his real name is Thorling), a true and loyal member of the Thieves' Guild. His continuing assignment is to stake out The Serpent's Tooth to make sure that nothing untoward occurs to compromise a perfect spot to conduct guild business. He spends much time in the barroom, awaiting specific instructions (always relayed via a messenger known to him). This assignment doesn't mean that Graywand can't take advantage of any opportunity for thievery that presents itself, as long as such activities don't interfere with his primary purpose. Graywand's identity and the reason for his presence are open secrets among the tavern's regulars.

Graywand: AC 8; MV 12; T6; hp 20; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; S 13, D 13, C 14, I 12, W 11, Ch 13; PP 50%, OL 53%, FT 56%, MS 43%, HS 33%, DN 16%, CW 68%, RL 21%; AL LE. He wears leather armor and carries a short sword, club, dagger, thief 's kit, potion of *invisibility*, 5 pp, 10 gp, 15 sp, and 5 cp.

Graywand is a typical dwarf: intense, dour, and apt to take himself very seriously. If treated with the respect he thinks he deserves, however, he can be a good communications channel to the Thieves' Guild.

Graywand is often (70% of the time) accompanied by 1-3 **junior thieves** (AC 8; MV 12; T1; hp 6, 3, 2; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type; all abilities average (except D 13); PP/OL/FT/MS/HS/DN 20%, CW 60%, RL nil; leather armor, short swords, daggers; AL LE).

If Graywand sees the PCs spending inordinate amounts of time around The Snake, his instincts insist that they are planning some kind of theft. At an opportune time, he approaches the PCs and tells them bluntly that The Snake is "a guild shop" and not a place for free-lance thieves to try anything. If any of the PCs are obviously thieves (tight-fitting black clothing, for example, or thief's kit prominently displayed), he lays on a heavy recruiting pitch. If the PCs convince him that their interests lie elsewhere, he withdraws sullenly but keeps a close eye on them from that moment on.

Another tavern regular who'll be interested in the PCs' movements is Thorn, a good-looking young man with long dark hair and equally dark eyes. Thorn is an independent thief, not a member of the guild, and is totally opposed to the existence of such a restrictive body.

Despite (or because of) his slender build and 5'5" height, Thorn holds a healthy disregard for the "square-headed sword-swingers" that surround him and believes—not without reason—that his intellect makes him better than most of them. He does realize, however, that fighters generally receive more respect and have an easier time of it than do thieves, so he's cultivated a heavy, flat-footed stride that totally obscures his natural catlike grace. If asked about his profession and background, he's generally insolent—but not quite insolent enough to provoke a fight—implying that he's a swordsman of some skill and renown despite his youth. As a matter of fact, Thorn can count his fights on the fingers of one hand and has, as of yet, never killed a man (in his heart, he takes more than a little pride in that).

Thorn: AC 8; MV 12; T4; hp 17; #AT 1 (3 with darts); THAC0 19; Dmg by weapon type; S 10, D 15, C 12, I 16, W 10, Ch 12; PP 43%, OL 35%, FT 34%, MS 32%, HS 24%, HN 15%, CW 87%, RL nil; AL CN. He wears padded armor and an iron helm, and carries a short sword, three daggers, six darts, a thief's kit (well hidden), a skin of cheap wine, 5 gp, 32 sp, 25 cp, and a shark-tooth ring (worth 125 gp).

Thorn was born in a small farming village, and his background is still enough with him to make him uncomfortable. Although he doesn't admit it even to himself, he feels like a hick compared to the sophisticated city dwellers who now surround him. Much of his insolence and wise-guy posturing is merely to cover his feelings of inferiority.

Thorn frequents The Serpent's Tooth because it's a good place to learn what the guild is up to (and therefore how to keep out of its way), and because it's a good breeding ground for future scores. Thorn knows who Graywand is and avoids him, not wishing to be identified as an "independent" and thereafter pushed around.

When Graywand approaches the PCs, Thorn is in the vicinity to notice and to wonder what the meeting means. Are the strangers also guild members? Once Graywand has left, Thorn in turn drifts over the PCs and tries casually to pump them about what Graywand had to say. Before leaving, he offers them some information, free of charge. Is the information valuable? "Are your lives valuable? I know somebody who tried to put a sting on Andura," he tells them. "I saw him after. Not a pretty sight. Enough to put you off cooked meat for life." (In this, Thorn is lying. He knows nobody who's tried a score at The Snake. He sees the PCs as unknown quantities and therefore dangerous. If he can scare them away from his territory, all the better.)

Everybody else at the tavern—Gral and the regular drinkers—can't help but notice these conversations. The general effect is that everyone will be keeping a close eye on the PCs, making their job more difficult.

Remember that if the PCs question tavern patrons and are not extremely subtle about it, word will probably find its way back to Andura and her colleagues that something is up. Remember also that, while some tavern patrons know something about Andura and the others, no one knows everything. If the PCs try to build up a picture of Andura and her habits, it should be a difficult process fraught with contradictions and outright lies.

Reporting to Argent

Although Argent will be interested in hearing about the evening comings and goings of the adventurers—after all, they represent three more swords that could puncture his precious skin—his main requirement is intelligence about

Andura herself. At each meeting, he repeatedly presses the PCs for more details on Andura's movements and the layout of the upper floor of the tavern. He always disguises this interest by professing a need to know exactly where the insurgents are cloistered with Andura, "so my boys know exactly where to go when we move. The more you tell me, the fewer men we'll lose." In effect—although he'll never admit it outright—Argent is pushing the PCs to infiltrate the upper floor of The Serpent's Tooth.

Encounter Key

Unless otherwise stated, all ceilings are 10' high. Windows (securely barred with iron rods 8" apart) are 4' high, starting 4' off the floor.

Main Floor

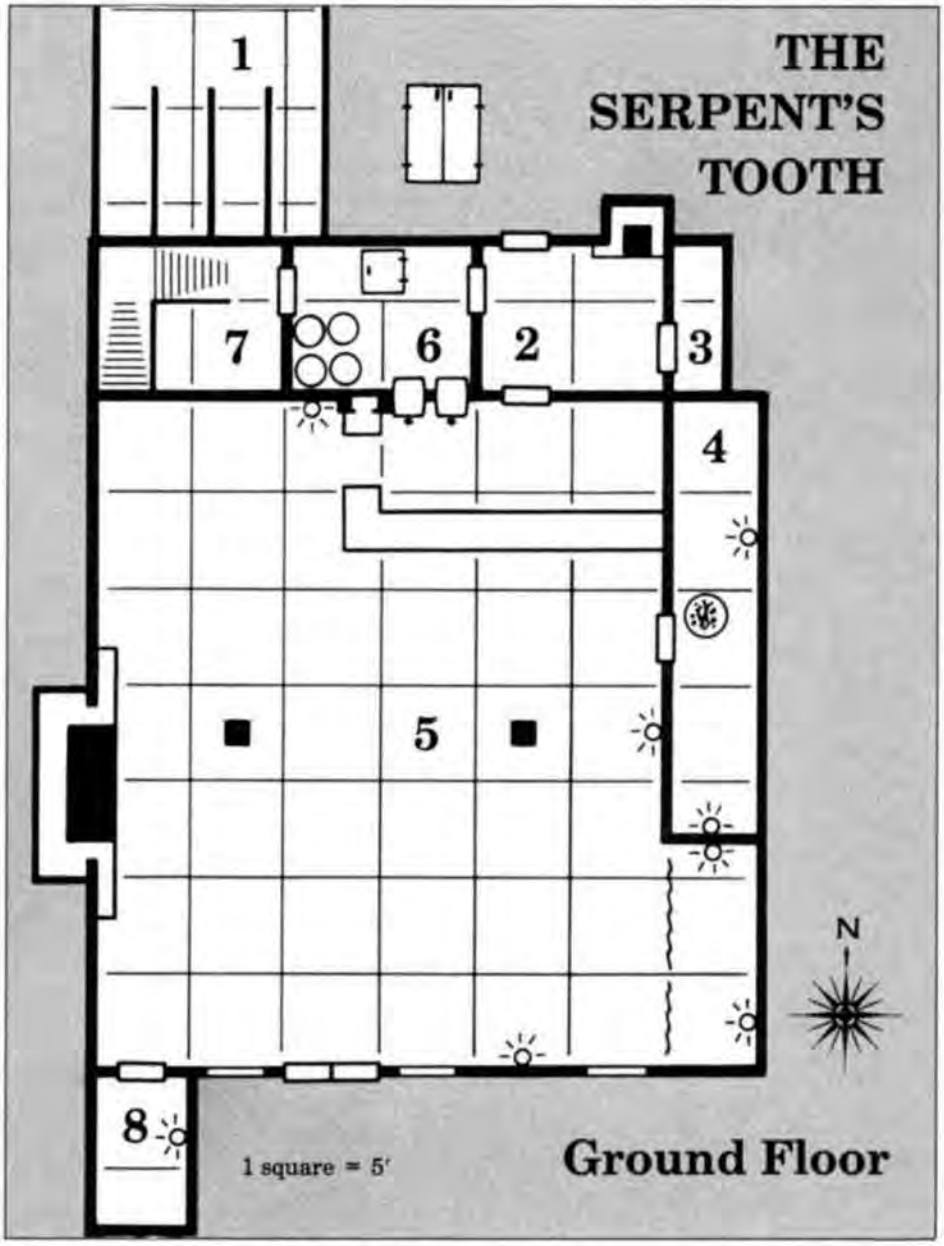
The main floor is typical of dockside inns: grimy walls, ceilings discolored by soot from the lamps that light the barroom, dust on everything. The floor consists of chipped and dirty flagstones. When the barroom is full—which it is most evenings—the dull roar of conversation and merriment can be heard throughout the main floor.

1. Wooden Stable. The structure is ill maintained, with rotting straw on the floor and in the mangers. In the eastern stall are four empty beer barrels. None of the regulars keep their horses here (they know better). The stable is currently occupied by 20 rats and three giant rats. The stable is unlighted, and so presents a black and threatening appearance at night.

Rats (20): AC 7; MV 15; HD 1/4; hp 2(×12), 1(×8); #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1; SA 5% chance/bite of causing serious disease; AL N; MM2/105.

Giant rats (3): AC 7; MV 12; HD 1/2; hp 4, 3, 2; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1-3; SA 5% chance/bite of causing serious disease; AL N; MM1/81.

2. Kitchen. The fireplace in the northeast is a recent addition; the brickwork is obviously newer and of lower quality than the rest. In the south wall is a serving hatch giving access to the bar. During mealtimes—11:30 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. and 6:00 P.M. to 11:00 P.M.—the kitchen is occupied by Darg, a female half-orc and Gralnakh's part-time lover. The back door is always barred from the inside, but not locked.



Darg: AC 10; MV 12; F2; hp 13; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg by weapon type; knife; AL CN. Little is known about Darg. She is not especially talkative and usually keeps to herself, conversing only when necessary.

Like many of the nonpublic areas of the building, this room is lit by a 4"-diameter disk set into the ceiling, on which a *continual light* spell has been cast. This disk is part of the building's construction and cannot be removed. The disk can be covered (thus turning out the light) by a sliding metal plate. In contrast to this innovation, the kitchen is dirty and malodorous with spoiled food.

3. Larder. Miscellaneous cooking utensils, all bearing signs of hard use and little cleaning, hang from hooks on the wall. Suspended from the beams are doubtful-looking sausages and strings of garlic and other spices. Bags piled haphazardly on the floor hold rounds of old rank cheese, smelly fish, unappetizing vegetables, and loaves of dark, gritty bread. This room is also lit by a *continual light* disk.

4. Private Room. In the center is a

fire pit with a funnel chimney above it (this chimney passes through the second floor just to the north of room 23). A small fire burns here 50% of the time. Around the fire pit are four rough benches. The room is lit by the fire and by small oil lamps mounted on the wall, hence the ceiling is even sootier here than in other rooms. The rickety door can be latched from the inside. The bartender always lets regulars use the back room for private business if they ask permission first. To strangers, it's always "Occupied!" (A bribe of at least 1 sp might change this, however.)

5. Main Barroom. The large double doors can be locked but never are. The flagstone floor is covered with sawdust (to absorb spilled drinks and other liquids). The ceiling is supported by two sturdy pillars. There are six rough tables and 25 benches, all stained with spilled drinks and bearing carved initials and other graffiti ("Half-orcs eat their dead," "Help the City Watch. Beat yourself up," "Say it with flowers. Send her a mantrap," etc.). The room is lit by the fire in the large hearth to the west and by small oil lamps on the walls. These lamps are necessary, even in broad daylight, because the windows are so grimy as to be almost opaque. The air is thick with smoke and the reek of stale beer, grease, and unwashed bodies.

The alcove to the southeast holds one table and three benches, and is curtained off for privacy. The curtains are backed by light chain mail that provides a bonus of +5 to the armor class of anyone behind them. A shapely stripper dances in the northwest corner of the barroom. None of the regulars pay her any attention, and some even go so far as to walk right through her. She is a *permanent illusion* created by an illusionist who owed Andura some favors.

The bar to the north is chest high with no stools. Behind the bar are two barrels of ale, tapped and ready, and several bottles of wine and whiskey. Underneath the bar is Gralnakh's club and the cashbox. Because the cashbox is emptied every hour (as discussed below), the most it ever contains is only 1-6 gp, 1-20 sp, and 2-40 cp. On the wall behind the bar is a large sign reading, "No Credit."

At the west end of the bar, next to the hinged section that allows access for the bartender, is what appears to be a "magic portal." It is a square aperture in the wall, about 8" on a side, with a brightly glowing outline and a pitch-black interior. Every hour, the bartender on duty (usually Gralnakh, although Darg takes a shift occasionally) inserts the cashbox into this portal and mumbles an incantation. When he or she removes the cashbox again, it is empty. This magical cash-out procedure impresses most who see it and deters those who think about stealing the cash.

In fact, the "magic portal" is another *permanent illusion* created by the wizard responsible for the tavern's dancer. The portal actually covers a small dumbwaiter that leads up to room 16. The "magical" disappearance of the cash is achieved through two identical cashboxes and the assistance of someone upstairs.

In addition to the tavern encounters detailed in "The Investigation," the barroom always has a number of patrons partaking of its hospitality. It is up to the DM to describe the comings and goings of customers necessary to create a dynamic bar scene, but the chart in the sidebar can be consulted for an idea of the clientele present at any time.

6. Storeroom. Lit by a *continual light* disk, this room provides some storage for the tavern's beer supply. In addition to the full barrels standing on end, two other barrels with taps in place are inserted through appropriately sized holes in the wall into the bar area. All barrels are 2' in diameter and 4' long. When full they weigh about 800 lbs. each. Fastened to the roof is a block and tackle used to hoist barrels from the cellar below the trapdoor in the floor. The square marked outside the storeroom to the north represents a trapdoor leading from the alley to the cellar (see

Barroom Customers

	Day	Night
Sailors, workers, etc.	1-8	2-20
Prostitutes	0-3	1-6
Thieves	0-2	1-3
Ruffians	0-2	2-6
Merchants	1-2	1-2
Assassins	0-1	0-1

Sailor/worker: AC 10; MV 12; zero-level human (10% chance to be F1); hp 2-7; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; dagger (50%), short sword and dagger (20%), flensing knife (20%, treat as glaive), unarmed (10%); 1-8 sp, 1-10 cp; AL N, CN, CE.

Prostitute: AC 10; MV 12; zero-level human; hp 1-4; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; dagger (75%), unarmed (25%); 0-2 gp, 1-8 sp, 1-10 cp; AL N.

Thief: AC 8; MV 12; T1-4; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; leather armor (often concealed), short sword, dagger; AL any but good. These thieves are members of the guild, who are here for a variety of purposes: to meet with Graywand, stalk merchants, or carry on other business. They are often disguised as members of other professions (workers, sailors, even merchants).

Ruffians are typically sailors, ships' officers, or workers who are a little more boisterous when drunk than the norm. They generally are 1st- or 2nd-level fighters, AC 10, and carry the weapons typical of sailors or workers. They are often drunk and abusive despite the looming presence of Bubba.

Merchant: AC 8 or 7; MV 12 or 9; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; leather or studded leather armor, long sword, dagger, 1-10 pp, 1-100 gp; AL LN. Merchants are typically lesser traders and members of the smaller merchant organizations, although occasionally members of the larger costers appear (perhaps to arrange deals with gray traders). They are usually 1st-level fighters (70%), although sometimes higher-level retired fighters are encountered (15% F2, 8% F3, 4% F4, 3% F5). Merchants of 3rd level and above are usually accompanied by 2-8 **bodyguards** (AC 8; MV 12; zero-level humans; hp 2-7; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type; leather armor, short sword; AL LN).

Assassins are junior members of the Assassins' Guild, typically 1st- or 2nd-level thieves or fighters (equal chance of each). They are usually disguised as members of some other profession—usually workers or sailors—with the arms and armor applicable to their apparent classes (no assassin ever travels unarmed, however).

room 24). This trapdoor is secured with a large padlock. The air is thick with the sharp smell of stale beer.

7. Stairway to Second Floor. At the foot of the stairs is a concealed peephole allowing a clear view of the barroom. The stairway is lit by a *continual light* disk.

8. Privy. The door can be latched from the inside, although none too securely. The room is lit by a small oil lamp mounted on the wall. The atmosphere here is such that even flies don't linger for long. Nevertheless, the walls are liberally spiced with graffiti ("Support graffiti. Sign a partition," "Can we have another wall?," etc.).

Second Floor

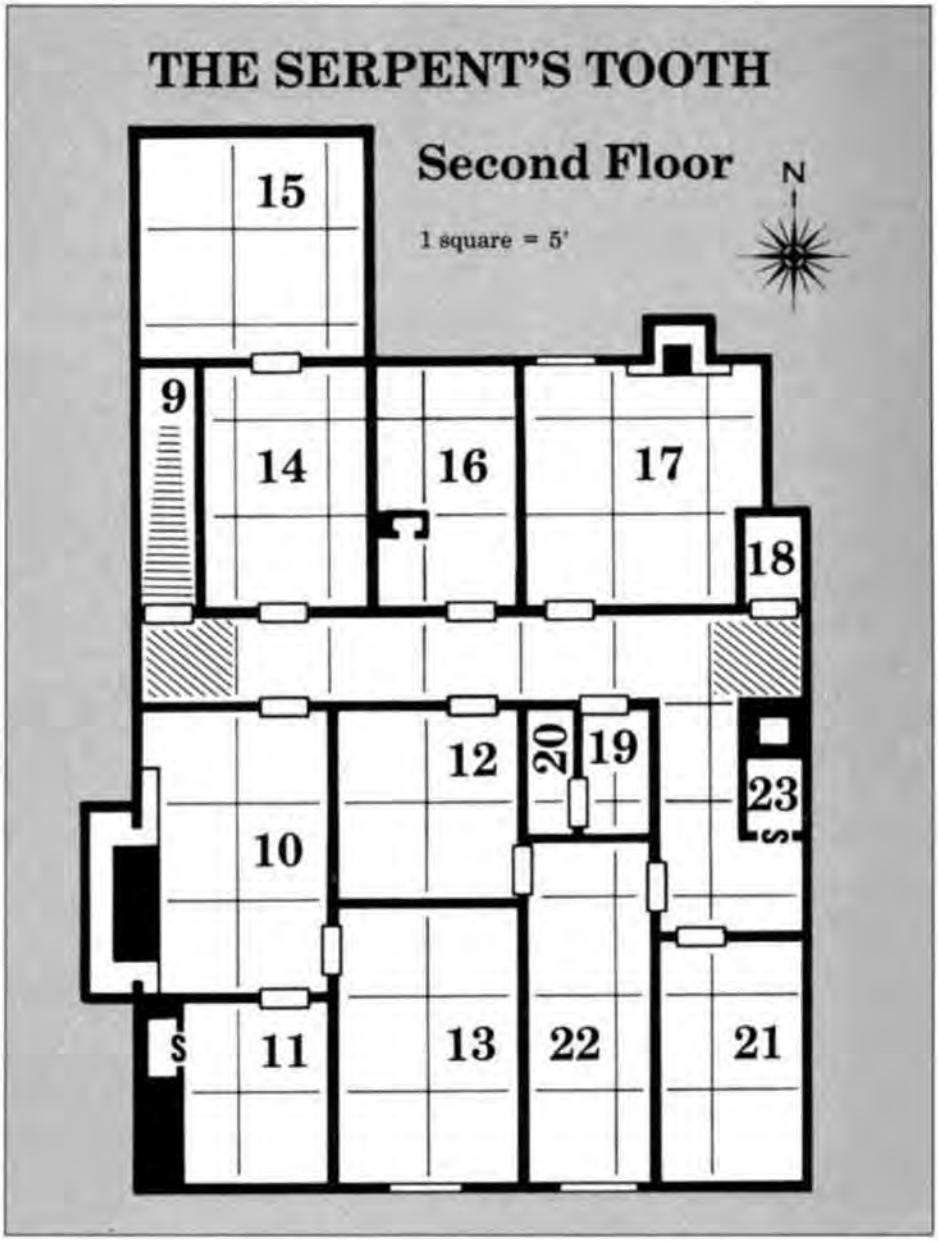
All areas on this level are brightly lit by *continual light* disks as described for room 2. For some rooms, percentage chances are given for particular NPCs to be present. These chances should be modified based on the PCs' actions and the NPCs they may have already encountered. Use common sense and logic when placing NPCs.

The two areas of the east-west corridor marked with dotted lines represent traps. If the *magic mouth* spell on the door of room 16 is triggered, these traps are armed. When anyone enters the area of a trap without first saying the word "amicus," the trap is triggered, casting a *web* spell (at 7th level of ability) into the area. The traps can be disarmed only by saying the word "semita." They can be armed at any time by saying the word "cave." These words are known only to Andura and Gralnakh.

In direct contrast to the floor below, this level is scrupulously clean. Unless otherwise specified, the floors are fine hardwood, polished to a rich luster. If the floors have been recently polished (10% chance) they are slippery; any running character has a 25% chance per round of falling painfully (1 hp damage). When the barroom is full, the noise can still be heard on this floor, but only faintly.

While the PCs are on this floor, roll 1d6 each turn. By day, a roll of 5 or 6 indicates an encounter; by night, a 6 indicates an encounter. Roll 1d20 and consult the sidebar to determine the nature of the encounter.

9. Stairway to Ground Floor. (see area 7).



10. Andura's Library, Living Room, and Private Office. This room is comfortably furnished with expensive leather furniture: a sofa, two armchairs, and a leather-topped table. In the northeast corner is a heavy desk. Its two drawers, both locked, contain accounts and records for the tavern (nothing incriminating or even interesting). A large woven carpet covers the floor. The east, south, and north walls are covered with bookshelves holding nonmagical books written in most of the major human and demi-human languages and covering a wide range of topics, particularly history. Andura has read very few of these books but enjoys the ambience of having them around. She intends to study them one day when she retires. On either side of the fireplace on the western wall hang fine elven tapestries (worth 500 gp each). A fire of sweet-smelling wood burns 50% of the time.

Andura is present 20% day/20% night. Renaldo, Celegon, Daland, and Liramar might also be present, as detailed in the "Events" section.

11. Andura's Den and Trophy Room. The door is always locked. The

floor is covered by a woven carpet, but the only furniture present is one comfortable leather sofa. The decor consists of weapons and trophies as follows:

East wall: minotaur's axe (flawed, shatters on first blow); giant's helmet (cloven); orc standard (red dagger on black field); three notched orc scimitars.

South wall: two riven shields bearing the orc dagger motif; long bow; heavy crossbow; beaten gold plaque depicting a rat (value 1,000 gp); shaman's mask with white face, red eyes, and fangs.

North wall: tapestry depicting a sailing ship (value 750 gp); two red dragon scales; flail (the design is unfamiliar, obviously nonhuman); notched two-handed sword with gold pommel (value 350 gp); dragon tooth worked into a dagger (value 500 gp); short spear with unusual head design (an assegai).

Hung on the west wall is an owlbear skin covering the door to a safe, which is locked with a modified *wizard lock* spell (cast at 20th level of ability). To lock and unlock the safe, a word of release is necessary ("nemo" to open, "compos" to close; these words are known only to Andura). A *knock* spell or equivalent can open the safe but also triggers a *symbol of insanity* (the *symbol* is not triggered if the word of release is used). The safe contains a dragon tooth carved into the shape of Tiamat (value 700 gp), a platinum statue of an owl (value 5,000 gp), a platinum ring inset with an emerald (value 1,000 gp), and a small crystal flask that radiates magic. Andura doesn't know what this is. The flask is of no real value but has had a permanent version of *Nystul's magic* aura cast on it.

Andura is present 15% of the time, day or night. The room is well cared for and obviously means a lot to Andura.

12. Business Office. This room is used only for official business and appears cold and soulless. Facing the hallway door is a large, heavy desk with a comfortable chair behind it. Facing the desk are two hard and uncomfortable wooden chairs. The desk has three drawers, all locked, containing more tavern records (mostly salaries and disbursements; again, nothing very interesting). On the desk is a large blotter framed in leather, a pen stand holding two quill pens, and an inkwell. Mounted on the wall behind the desk is a leopard skin. A secret door to room 13 is concealed behind a bookcase.

Andura is present 10% day/5% night. Gralnakh is present 5% day/1% night.

13. Andura's Bedroom. An elven carpet (value 700 gp) covers the floor. Three paintings, landscapes in some unfamiliar style (value 500 gp each), decorate the walls. Against the east wall is a large, comfortable bed. A wardrobe against the south wall contains expensive clothes in Andura's size, emphasizing her feminine side (which she normally dresses to conceal). Beside the wardrobe is a two-drawer dresser. Apart from clothing, one dresser drawer contains a dagger; the second holds a pearl necklace (value 400 gp) in an obsidian case (value 250 gp) and a number of fine silk scarves. Both drawers are locked. A stick of heady incense always burns in a brass holder atop the dresser (to mitigate the beer fumes that sometimes make their way up through the floor). The furniture is all well made and bespeaks wealth.

In the southeast corner is a battered footlocker containing a helmet, chain mail, a long sword, a hand axe, and a light crossbow, all well used but well maintained. A secret compartment in the bottom of the footlocker holds a platinum ceremonial dagger (not usable; value 1,750 gp). The secret compartment is unlocked but protected with a poison needle trap.

Andura is present 10% day/80% night.

14. Chess Room. A carpet sporting large white and black squares lies on the floor. In fact, the entire room is decorated in a black-and-white motif, with two comfortable chairs facing each other across a large chess table. The board is inlaid with ivory and ebony (value 500 gp; weight 95 lbs.). The black pieces are obsidian (worth 10 gp each) and the white are chalcedony (worth 15 gp each). Normally the pieces are set up in complex chess problems.

The board itself is dweomered to speak out each move (e.g., "King's bishop to king's rook six. Check.") at a normal conversational volume. If a piece is removed from the board, the board calls out the name of the piece and awaits the completion of the move.

The *continual light* disk in the ceiling is smaller than those in the other rooms, giving a warmer, less brilliant light.

Andura is present 20% day/10% night. Gral is present 15% day/5% night. Renaldo is present 10% day/5% night.

15. Chess Library. This door is always locked. The north wall is covered with books on chess, some quite rare. The only furniture is a single leather chair, comfortable and lived in. The room has the warm ambience of a well-loved refuge from the day's cares. Andura is present 5% day/5% night. Gral is present 10% day/0% night. Renaldo is present 5% day/0% night.

16. Vault Room. The door is locked, and trapped with a poison needle. In addition, a *magic mouth* spell has been cast on the door. It is triggered by anyone opening the door without using the key. If triggered, the *magic mouth* cries "Intruders!" very loudly. This cry can be heard anywhere on the second floor, and there is a 75% chance that the bartender in the tavern also hears it.

In the west wall is a small dumbwaiter connected to the bar. It is from here that Andura or Gralnakh stage-manages the seemingly miraculous disappearance of the cashbox money every hour or so. A locked chest in the northwest corner contains bar records. A locked chest (with a poison needle trap) in the northeast corner contains bar receipts: 1-10 pp, 10-1,000 gp, 80-800 sp, and 100-1,000 cp. The room is otherwise bare and undecorated. Andura is present 15% day/10% night. Gralnakh is present 20% day/10% night.

17. Gralnakh's Bedroom. On the floor is a huge bear skin. Against the east wall is a comfortable bed. Beneath the bed is a chest containing Gral's personal belongings: a long sword in silk wrappings, a great helm, three daggers, a light crossbow and two dozen quarrels, plus leather sacks containing 50 pp and 375 gp. A secret compartment—unlocked and untrapped—in the bottom of the chest hides an obsidian box (worth 350

Second Floor

	Day	Night
Andura	1-7	1-8
Darg	8-10	9-14
Gralnakh	11-14	15
Cook*	15	16-18
Drudge**	16-20	19-20

* See area 19 for statistics.
** AC 10; MV 12; zero-level human; hp 3; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL N.

gp) containing assorted gemstones: 1,000 gp (×1), 500 gp (×2), 350 gp (×3). The secret compartment also contains an ancient book on the game of chess, worth 1,500 gp to the right buyer. The wisdom within explains Gralnakh's frequent victories over Andura.

Against the west wall is a wardrobe containing clothing, a suit of chain mail, and a woman's nightgown (belonging to Darg, of course). Under the window is a small bookcase holding several books on chess (none as valuable as the one hidden in the chest). There are other assorted signs that Gral has female companionship from time to time, (for example, smears of makeup on the pillow, a small jar under the bed containing the heavy rouge favored by Darg, etc.).

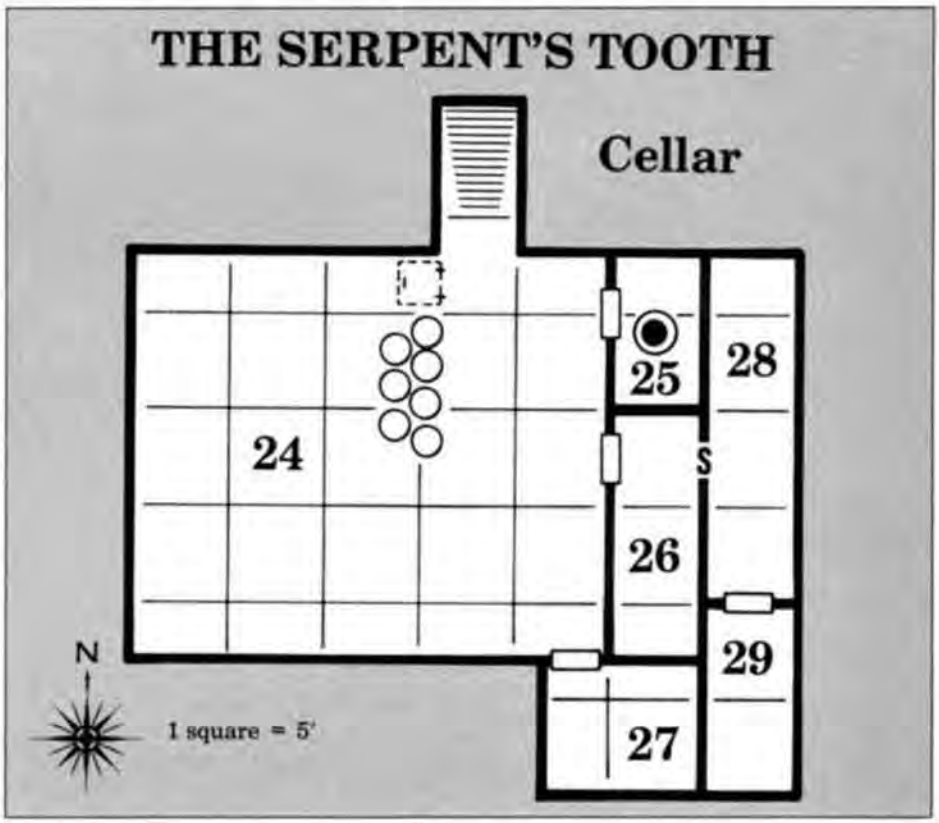
A fire of sweet-scented wood burns in the fireplace 25% of the time. Gralnakh is present 75% day/20% night. Darg is present 10% day/85% night.

18. Privy. Unlike that on the main floor, this facility is clean and well maintained. The toilet uses a form of *teleportation* to relocate anything inanimate deposited in it to the sewers below the tavern (magical items receive a saving throw vs. magical fire; nonmagical items receive no save). Only complete items are affected (thus it cannot be used to remove, for example, the lid from a small chest). A small table bears assorted reading material: satirical pamphlets, political broadsheets, books of trashy stories, etc. An urn of fresh water stands in the corner, and a hook on the wall holds a towel.

19. Kitchen. It is here that Andura's meals are cooked (she knows better than to eat the tavern food). A fire burns in the fireplace 50% of the time. A cook is present 25% of the time. The kitchen is spotlessly clean, with burnished copper utensils and strings of expensive spices hanging from the beams. The floor is tiled.

Cook: AC 10; MV 12; zero-level human; hp 7; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type; cleaver (as hand axe), kitchen knife (as dagger); AL N.

20. Larder. The northern half of the room is kept near freezing (thanks to a modified *wall of ice* spell). Walls, ceiling, and floor are tiled to help contain the cold. Food and drink—incomparably better than that stored below—are everywhere: rounds of cheese, sides of meat, salted bacon in wax paper, flasks of fine wine and brandy, barrels of good beer, bushel baskets of vegetables, strings of spices, tubs of butter, etc. To a hungry PC, this room would be heaven!



21. Storage Room. The door is always locked. The room is piled, floor to ceiling, with worthless junk. Though there is absolutely nothing here of any measurable value, the DM should allow the PCs to waste as much time searching as they wish. The junk includes such things as old furniture; pots and pans; empty bottles; frayed ropes; old canvas; a rusted and useless broad sword; wooden boxes (most broken, all empty); a spidery metallic contraption (actually a broken umbrella, devised by a cunning inventor); an iron poker tied in a knot (thanks to Bubba); a key ring full of keys (none of them fit anything around the tavern); three locks with no keys; a worthless painting (with part of it scraped away to reveal it was painted on top of another worthless painting); a vellum sketchbook full of very bad sketches; and even an old, battered version of the tavern sign.

22. Dining Room. While Andura and Gralnakh usually eat in their rooms, business dealings occasionally require dinner parties to be thrown. This room features a 10'-long table and six chairs. A woven carpet covers the floor. A low cabinet in the northwest corner contains six place settings and a fine cotton tablecloth, plus a four-armed candelabrum of filigreed silver (value 500 gp). Light-smelling incense burns continually on the cabinet. Andura is present 5% day/5% night. If Andura is present, there is a 50% chance that Gralnakh is also present and a dinner party is in progress (DM's option as to guests).

23. Bolt Hole. This secret room is intended as a sanctuary in case the upper floor is invaded. Hanging on the walls are a set of chain mail (Andura's size), two long swords, two shields, two short bows, and 48 arrows. There are also stoppered bottles of water, four days' supply of nonperishable food, and a covered chamber pot. The door can be securely latched from the inside but normally remains unlatched. (The space to the north of room 23 is the chimney from room 4.)

Cellar

All areas in the cellar (except for room 24) are brightly lit by *continual light* disks as described at room 2. The floors are of old and chipped flagstone. Noises from the barroom above can be heard on this level, though faintly.

As on the second floor, there is a chance to encounter any of The Snake's residents down here. Roll 1d20 and see the sidebar to discover whom the PCs may meet in the cellar.

24. Main Cellar. A trapdoor and ladder give access to room 6 above. A steeply sloping ramp leads up to another trapdoor, which is kept locked and barred. This trapdoor (the outside one described at room 6) is used for deliveries of beer, etc. Barrels of beer are arrayed under this trapdoor, ready to be hoisted upstairs when needed. There is a single *continual light* disk in the ceiling right next to the trapdoor to room 6. Its light extends only 15', so the farther reaches of the room are in shadow. Old, rank sawdust covers the floor near the ramp. The dark areas are dirty and unused, and the far southwest corner is home to four giant centipedes. Cobwebs are everywhere, and nonpoisonous spiders thrive here.

Centipedes, giant: AC 9; MV 15; HD 1/4; hp 2(×2), 1(×2); #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg nil; SA poison (save at +4); AL N; MM1/14.

25. Well Room. The well is surrounded by a low stone parapet carved with elven designs and mounted with a small winch and bucket. The surface of the fresh, cold water is 4' below the parapet. Two empty earthenware pitchers stand in the southwest corner of the room. The door is always locked. This room is used frequently and kept quite clean.

Cellar Encounters

	Day	Night
Andura	1-5	1-3
Darg	6-12	4-7
Gralnakh	13-14	8-9
Drudge	15-17	10
Rats*	18-20	11-20

* By day, 1-4; by night, 2-8. See area 1 for statistics.

26. Workshop. Gralnakh occasionally tries his hand at carpentry, so this room contains three chairs and a table, all broken and awaiting his attention. Against the east wall is a carpenter's workbench. A locked box beneath contains a set of carpenter's tools. There is a dusting of relatively fresh sawdust and wood chips on the floor, although a broom and dustpan in the corner indicate that Gral at least makes an effort to keep the room clean. The secret door in the east wall was installed by previous owners of the building and is unknown to everyone currently occupying The Serpent's Tooth.

27. Old Storeroom. This room was Stront's prison cell. There is dirty straw on the floor and two heavy shackles attached to the south wall. Nearby are scratches on the wall as if someone had been keeping track of days (there are a lot of scratches). Andura, Renaldo, and Gralnakh know who was kept here and why, but they won't tell. The door is kept locked.

28. Map Library. The existence of this room and room 29 is unknown to the present occupants of the building. The walls are lined with bookcases containing maps, all bound in heavy leather. Although there are over 100 bindings here, only three maps have escaped the attentions of two bookworms that lair in the bookcases. These three maps are of elven drafting of the finest quality, worth 1,000 gp each to the right buyer.

Dust on the floor, cobwebs in the corners, and a musty smell to the air hint that this room has been unused for many years. The room has the same heavy sense of history as a museum.

Bookworms (2): AC 2; MV 12(3); HD 1/4; hp 2 (×2); #AT nil; THAC0 20; Dmg nil; AL N; MM2/21.

29. Map Room. In the center of the room is a table on which a map is painted in fine detail. It depicts the Sword Coast from Beregost in the south to The Winding Water in the north, from High Horn in the east to the Sea of Swords in the west. Inland cities are marked with inlaid gold disks (value 10 gp each); ports are marked with platinum disks (value 50 gp each). The room is occupied by a haunt, the spirit of an elven mariner who died here long ago. Her spirit cannot rest until it has completed the voyage to the Moonshae Islands for which she was preparing. Perhaps because of the haunt's presence, this room has an even greater feeling of age and brooding history than room 28.

Haunt: AC 0/victim's AC; MV 6/as possessed victim; HD 5/victim's hp; hp 31; #AT 1/1 (as 5-HD monster); THAC0 15; Dmg special; SA dexterity drain, possession; SD hit only by fire and silver or magical weapons, may not be turned; AL LG; MM2/74.

Concluding the Adventure

It is quite likely that the PCs will attempt to infiltrate the upper floor of The Serpent's Tooth. If so, the tactics for entering and searching the building are entirely up to the PCs. The DM should give them no guidelines or hints; let them make their own mistakes. The security in the upper level of the building is such that it's very doubtful the PCs will pull off such a raid successfully. If they are discovered in the act, the consequences depend on who catches them. Liramar, Celegon, and Daland are likely to attack first and ask questions later, believing the only good intruder is a dead intruder. Andura, Renaldo, and Gral are more likely to ask for the intruders' surrender. If the PCs are lucky enough to be brought before Andura alive, she tries to get to the bottom of things, asking what they thought they were doing breaking into her home. The PCs should role-play this interrogation with the DM.

If the PCs tell Andura the truth, the DM should evaluate how convincing they sound and decide whether Andura believes them (alternatively, the DM can determine this by die roll; Andura is 75% likely to believe the truth). If Andura believes the PCs, she asks for a description of the person who hired them. She recognizes the description as that of a feared free-lance killer and tells the PCs his true name (Hardrim), profession, and probable goal. She also recognizes the PCs' identification papers as forgeries

if they should show them to her.

Andura tells the PCs that Argent has played them for dupes and asks them if they want a chance to even the score. If the PCs agree, she recommends they track down Argent and "do something permanent about him." If the adventurers decline, she confiscates all their possessions "as payment for my inconvenience" and ejects them from the tavern, telling them never to return on pain of death.

If the PCs don't tell Andura the truth—no matter how hard they try to convince her—Andura holds them until the City Watch can be summoned to take them into custody. Their ultimate fate is then in the hands of the city's judicial system. The same fate awaits them if they tell the truth but Andura doesn't believe them.

As to Argent, he doesn't care what happens to the PCs; he only wants his information. It's up to the DM to decide when he has enough data to make his hit. Remember that he needs, at the very least, a rough floor plan of the tavern building and an approximation of Andura's daily movements. Once he has enough information, he pays off the PCs and drops out of sight. Three days later, the PCs hear through the grapevine that Andura has been killed by a free-lance assassin, and they recognize the assailant's description as that of the man they knew as "Argent." Rumor also tells them that the assassin is returning by ship to his home in Waterdeep. The PCs may or may not decide to follow him and extract vengeance (or expiate their guilt in the death of a relatively innocent victim).

Gralnakh Longtooth and Renaldo react to Andura's death as might be expected. After a rampaging drunk, they sober up and join forces in tracking down and eliminating her killer. This hunt is the highest priority for both of them, and they will spare no expense or effort to succeed.

It might come to their attention that the PCs were somehow involved in Andura's death. If so, the DM must decide how their involvement might appear to Andura's friends. Should Renaldo and Gralnakh decide that the PCs were unwitting dupes, they might try to enlist the adventurers to their cause. Should they decide that the PCs knew what they were doing, however, Renaldo and Gralnakh will most certainly include the PCs in their vendetta.

After the vendetta has been settled, Gralnakh Longtooth takes over the running of The Serpent's Tooth, keeping the tavern open as a monument to Andura's memory. Renaldo leaves town to join Andura's old band in the Sunrise Mountains and never returns to Scornubel again. Ω

(continued from page 16)

If the adventurers take the time to visit the "inn" or the "church," the adult house hunters nearby will close in.

Adult house hunters (cottages 1, 2, and 4): HD 15; hp 75, 70, 64; #AT 3 (tongues and tentacles at fronts); THAC0 5; Dmg 3-18 (×3). These monsters look like brick-and-slate cottages. None of them is accompanied by any young.

Adult house hunters (cottages 3, 5, and 6): HD 17; hp 105, 95, 82; #AT 3 (tongues at fronts, tentacles at sides); THAC0 3; Dmg 3-18 (×3). These monsters appear to be stucco-and-thatch cottages. Each is accompanied by 1-2 **young house hunters** (HD 12; hp 55; #AT 3 (tongues and tentacles at fronts); THAC0 9; Dmg 2-12 (×3)) resembling wood sheds or outhouses.

Adult house hunters (cottages 7-10): HD 18; hp 120, 105, 87; #AT 3 (tongues and tentacles at fronts); THACO 3; Dmg 3-18 (×3). These house hunters prefer the appearance of log cabins. Each creature has sent its **young** (9 total; HD 14; hp 65; #AT 3 (tongues and tentacles at fronts); THAC0 7; Dmg 2-12 (×3)) to hide in the woods.

Concluding the Adventure

Despite the strength of these creatures, they shouldn't kill many smart PCs. They have normal vulnerabilities to magic and most other attacks, though getting past their armor may not be easy. They move slowly, and adventurers may be in more danger from young than from adults. Ideally, the party members should be able to cooperate to defeat these creatures by using missile attacks, setting them on fire with oil, etc.

Eventually, the PCs should be able to settle down to the task of gutting a hundred or so tons of noxious, blubbery monsters (if they still feel capable of this exertion) and will eventually find treasure as noted in the monster description. By the time they've finished, the PCs should smell like whalers who have spent several months at sea.

If the PCs are forced to escape and return with a larger party, they won't find the monsters here again; the house hunters will have moved to another site. It isn't hard to follow their wide trail of uprooted bushes and smashed trees, resembling the track of a herd of elephants, but the house hunters will block the trail with occasional piles of precariously balanced logs and shattered trees that could easily collapse on an incautious adventurer.

Regardless of the party's efficiency in defeating the house hunters, at least one **young house hunter** (one of the offspring of buildings 7-10, described previously) will survive to pursue them. It will be extremely cautious, preferring to confine its early attacks to pets, familiars, and other small prey (halflings, for example). The occasional glimpse of a small shed may become as sinister to the PCs as the sudden appearance of a shark's fin at sea.

Toward the end of the next day after they first encounter the house hunters, the adventurers should reach a real village. At first glance, it looks almost exactly like the pseudovillage of the house hunters. Encourage the party to use extreme caution when approaching these structures, even though the PCs will soon discover that this is merely a friendly hamlet. The inn doesn't have any beds, but there is an empty barn.

As night approaches, all of the villagers start to close their shutters and bar their doors. Is this just a coincidence, or is something sinister going on? It's up to you to decide. Ω

ENCOUNTER IN THE WILDWOOD

BY WILLIE WALSH

Diversity and perversity are hard to beat.

Artwork by Jim Holloway

In lieu of his usual notes from Dublin, Willie sent this brief account, which has something to do with the adventure:

A boggle wandered into a disused laboratory one day and activated a trap that gated *him away. He found himself standing on a flat, featureless plane with no frames anywhere to use with his* dimension door *power.*

As he looked around, the boggle spied a figure approaching. It turned out to be a demon brandishing a wicked-looking sword. The boggle had no option but to run for his life. However, the demon caught up with him, and the boggle had to make a desperate choice.

In fear of the quick reflexes of the demon, and knowing that getting close enough to use the demon's legs to dimension door *to the Astral plane was impossible, the boggle bent down, stuck his head through the V of his own legs . . . and disappeared!*

"Encounter in the Wildwood" would make an interesting diversion as part of a larger AD&D® module or campaign. It may also be used as an individual adventure with little modification. The whole adventure takes place in a wilderness setting—a wild but often-traveled wood is best if you are placing it in one of your own campaign settings—and it is intended for use with a party of 4-7 characters of levels 2-4 (about 17 total levels).

The adventurers should be returning from a particularly successful adventure in which they achieved their goals, won treasure, gained experience, and are feeling that everything is going fine. The following events should impress upon them that not everything goes their way all of the time. The scenario is centered on an ambush by a group of rather unusual collaborators.

Adventure Background

Chinpot and Tuggut are two cyclopskin who have not had too fine a time of it among their fellows in the hills. When they tired of being the objects of what passes for humor in cyclopskin quarters, they decided to leave familiar territory for a life of adventure.

Their adventures have been, by and large, not too successful. On one recent raid, Tuggut made such a wild effort with his slingshot that he accidentally shot Chinpot in the back of the head. He claimed he was aiming at a farmer. When they finally got back to their new

lair they were bruised, battered, and burned, and they'd decided not to attack defended homesteads anymore.

Then, by accident (it couldn't have been by design), Chinpot caught a boggle, and the cyclopskin figured they'd eat him. But when they got a good look at the creature, they saw that he was all "off center," so they couldn't decide how to share him fairly. Besides, he claimed to be an expert adventurer and offered to make life comfortable for the whole lot of them if only Chinpot and Tuggut wouldn't put him in the cooking pot.

So that was how two cyclopskin and a boggle set up a little business for themselves, waylaying unwary travelers instead of wasting time against fortified dwellings as they had in the past. Chinpot and Tuggut were very impressed with Nik-Nik, the boggle, and his unique way of picking pockets. In fact, it became something of a diversion for them to see Nik-Nik's disembodied hands appearing through crossed branches and sifting through an unsuspecting victim's gear. In order to use the creature's *dimension door* ability more profitably, they even set up frames of branches and odd pieces of timber in places near the forest track so the boggle (or parts thereof) could appear and disappear to the company's satisfaction.

Time went by, and the threesome flourished. When food was scarce, the boggle made snares by placing a frame outside an animal burrow and passing his hands through to grab anything that came out. Nik-Nik proved invaluable to the cyclopskin, who now regard him as something akin to a servant, which is probably as high a regard as they could have for anyone they consider weaker than themselves.

As the reputation of that particular area of the forest worsened, interested individuals began arriving to investigate and get a piece of the action. The result was the growth of the bandit gang to eight with the addition of a quickling named Zazzafizzlezizzle and four rather uncommunicative needlemen.

The quickling improved the original devices used by the boggle and devised contingency plans in case things should go wrong—something the others hadn't considered doing because of their successes.

The needlemen seem to be just along for the ride. They take shares in the treasures gained, but they seem more interested in the elimination of all elven travelers than in the gold or provisions pilfered by the others.

Into the Wildwood

The player characters should be traveling through the area in which this unusual bandit gang operates. You may wish to have them do so as a result of a wrong turn or a shortcut (see the AD&D® 2nd Edition *Dungeon Masters Guide,* page 127, "Getting Lost"). The PCs should possess a good quantity of treasure or magical items for Nik-Nik to pilfer, as the gradual (or sudden) loss of these items will give the PCs something to think about as they travel through the woodland. How the boggle operates his special *dimension door* power is explained in detail at the end of the adventure, where additional rules not found in *Monster Manual II* are included to clarify the boggle's talents.

It is not necessary for open conflict to occur, but if circumstances dictate that it must (if Nik-Nik is caught, for example), the tactics for combat as planned by the quickling Zazzafizzlezizzle are detailed in "The Ambush."

The PCs must spend at least one rest period of several hours (a whole night is better) in the encounter area shown on the map, to add to the fun inherent in the scenario. But prior to the ambush, the PCs meet a fellow traveler named Grikloon. You may read or paraphrase the following boxed description to the players at some point before the PCs arrive at the mapped area.

> You have been traveling along the forest track for quite a while and have just come upon a strange sight. By the side of the trail is a small figure seated on a hillock, his chin resting in his cupped hands. He seems totally unaware of the approach of your group, as if he is either lost in thought or just oblivious to his surroundings. He stretches his legs and yawns, showing a set of yellow fangs. Understandably, your attention is drawn to the creature's cloven feet and goatlike legs, which are revealed as it stands up. It blinks and scratches an area beside one of the two ivory horns growing from its head and then proceeds to study its fingernails carefully.

If the PCs think this is a satyr, then they must also think they've met the scruffiest-looking satyr ever created. This individual wears a canvas jacket dripping with colored beads, over which he wears some kind of a leather waistcoat with a large triangle pattern on its back, made from metal studs. The whole is dirty and smelly and could do with some minor repairs.

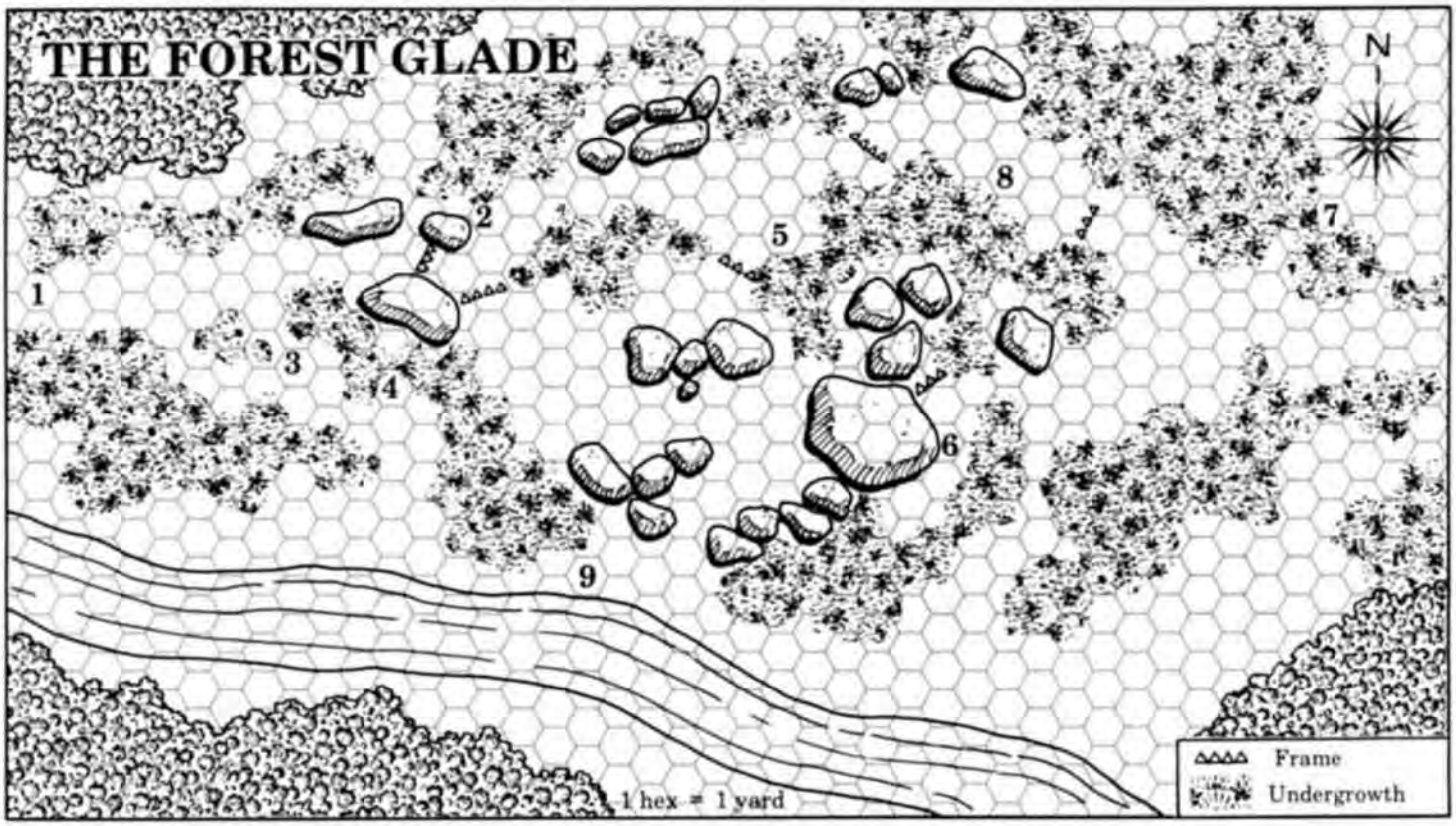
Grikloon, a forlarren: AC 2; MV 9; HD 3; hp 12; #AT 2; THAC0 17; Dmg 1-4/1-4; SA touch causes *heat metal* for 3-18 or 2-16 hp damage, for as long as the forlarren wills; AL NE; FF/39.

Grikloon is lost in the woods, though he isn't very perturbed about this fact. He reckons, quite rightly, that someone will come along the trail sooner or later. The forks and turn-offs ahead confuse him, so he's been sitting here for three days and is a little bored. If he is approached he seems amiable enough, as he wants the party to guide him to the edge of the woods—he is, in this case, in one of his good moods. This means that he won't attack the PCs on sight as noted in the FIEND FOLIO® tome, though the adventurers will see that he has great problems trying to control his left hand, which twitches and grasps at nothing and seems to have a will of its own. Grikloon casually slaps it with his right palm each time it starts to drag him toward one of the PCs, and this usually quiets it for a while.

Grikloon is quite content to amble along with the party and is quite a conversationalist (for a forlarren), being able to name three of the seven days of the week, count up to 10 with a 10% chance of doing so correctly, and find choice nestlings for luncheon with 90% accuracy. If combat breaks out between the PCs and the bandits, Grikloon quite happily joins in the fray until he receives his first wound. After this, he is equally cheerful about using his power to *heat metal* on the nearest armored PC, claiming that the PCs led him into a trap and that they must pay for their treachery.

Even for a forlarren, whose devil/nymph parentage gives him a personality split between good and evil, Grikloon is exceptionally erratic. Once the PC he attacks is reduced to negative hit points or is slain, the forlarren returns to fighting the bandits. When he is hit again, he attacks the nearest PC, as in the first instance. This sequence continues until Grikloon is either dead or reduced to 6 hp, in which case he flees the scene and disappears into the woods.

Grikloon knows little about the forest ("Not in't 'fore.") nor how to get out of it



("Gorra walk."). If he is offered food he accepts it, no matter how bad it is ("All same, in't it?"), but if he's offered treasure he refuses it ("No use owt 'ere."). He drinks nothing but water, so the PCs shouldn't be able to poison him or test out unknown potions on him. If attacked, he defends himself as described in the FIEND FOLIO tome.

The Forest Glade

The PCs must stay within the area delineated by the dotted line on the map because of the density of the undergrowth around this particular clearing. Unless the PCs have some magical means to penetrate or bypass the vegetation (such as *pass plant* or *fly* spells, etc.), they must hack their way through, giving the bandits plenty of scope for follow-up attacks.

It's assumed that the PCs enter the glade from the west, which is easy enough if they are actually traveling from that direction—or if they are lost and heading in the wrong direction. If this direction needs to be changed, simply redraw the compass rose to indicate the desired direction.

1. Forest Trail. The density of the plant growth on each side of the trail is relieved at last as the path enters a glade where the ground is rockier and only a few spindly trees and bushes grow. Briars and brambles arch across the trail where it comes into the clearing.

Some of this area has been cleared by Tuggut and Chinpot to make it more inviting to travelers wishing to take a rest from the monotony of the woodland. The soil here isn't too good, though, so the trees don't get a chance to grow very tall.

The boulders occur naturally (if you want to be precise, you can say that they were carried here by a glacier and left behind when the ice melted). Dwarves and gnomes can tell the rocks are not native to the area. A few of these boulders have been lightly coated with blackish boggle oil to make them slippery. There's a 35% chance that any PC climbing a boulder will encounter a patch of this oil. A successful dexterity check on 1d20 is required to keep one's footing or take 1-3 hp damage in a fall.

2. Briars Across the Gap. These thorny plants have been encouraged to grow across this gap (and others, as indicated on the map) because they simulate the frames needed by Nik-Nik to produce his *dimension door* entertainments for Tuggut and Chinpot. Zazzafizzlezizzle suggested these improvements on the crude wooden stakes the original threesome used, as the briars are less likely to arouse suspicion. PCs may push aside the briars without harm to themselves.

The boggle may stretch his body to about 6' to reach any of the frames made by the quickling, passing his hands or upper torso through via *dimension door* to attempt a theft (see "Boggle Behavior" for full details).

3. Quickling Hideout. Zazzafizzlezizzle hides in this bush as the PCs pass by. He won't show himself unless Nik-Nik gives the alarm to indicate something has gone wrong.

Zazzafizzlezizzle, the quickling: AC −3; MV 96; HD 1½; hp 12; #AT 3; THAC0 19; Dmg by weapon type; SA spells, speed; SD save as 19th-level priest, invisible when motionless, cannot be surprised; AL CE; MM2/103; spell-like powers: *ventriloquism, forget, levi-*

tate, shatter, dig, fire charm; dagger.

The quickling prefers things to go smoothly, as the deaths of travelers here might alert the authorities to send an armed force to eliminate the bandits. So far, a few minor magical items and some backpacks and money pouches have been lifted, and the group has only had to flee determined resistance once. The loot is stored at the gang's lair (see "Following Up"); the quickling prefers that the magical treasures be kept only for defending the lair, not for setting up the ambush.

Zazzafizzlezizzle is the brains behind the ambushes that the bandits carry out. He is wise enough to let Tuggut and Chinpot believe that they are the leaders of the group by dint of their greater size and strength, but he has impressed the needlemen and the boggle with shows of magic, leaving them in no doubt as to who is the real boss.

If the encounter goes badly for the ambushers, the quickling uses his spells to attempt a bloodless defeat of the PCs, or at least a distraction allowing the bandits to escape with minimal losses. The main concern of the quickling is the preservation of the boggle, as without his powers, the group would be reduced to common brigandage, relying on force alone to succeed.

Zazzafizzlezizzle uses his *ventriloquism* power to distract the PCs from Nik-Nik, if the boggle is caught, while his *shatter* spell prevents any PCs from quaffing potions; the spell destroys the vials, spilling the potions on the ground, if the requisite saving throws are failed. The quickling follows this up by casting a *dig* spell under the feet of the PC doing the most damage in combat.

4. Needlemen Under Cover. Two of the four needlemen are hidden in this thick section of undergrowth to cover Nik-Nik should he be in any danger. The other two needlemen are in hiding at area 8.

Needlemen (2): AC 6; MV 9; HD 3+4; hp 18, 17; #AT 1-6; THAC0 17; Dmg 1-2 each attack; SA surprise; SD camouflage; AL N; FF/67.

The needlemen are a weak point in Zazzafizzlezizzle's plans, though there's not much he can do about them. Regardless of the quickling's orders, there is always a 50% chance that the needlemen will attack any elves in a party without provocation. The quickling is resigned to the fact that they hate elves, though he's tried his best to figure out the cause of this enmity. His only progress in this matter is guesswork based on the extremely violent reactions of the needlemen if drow are brought up in conversation. He thinks perhaps the drow enslaved the needleman race at some point in their history, or that the needlemen may have even been created by the dark elves and have hated all elves since then. The plant beings remain an enigma to Zazzafizzlezizzle, and he's likely to leave them as sword fodder if things are going badly in combat and there's a chance for the rest of his band to escape.

5. Boggle Location. Nik-Nik hides in this area near a sending frame. He may use any of the frames within his 30-yard radius as receivers. Nik-Nik is hidden well enough to be invisible unless someone examines his particular bush; then he still has a 65% chance to remain unseen.

Nik-Nik, the boggle: AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+3; hp 18; #AT 3 (2); THAC0 17; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-4; SA rear claws for 1-4/1-4; SA steal one item per round if able to hit AC 5 (needs 1d20 roll of 12+); SD nonflammable oil, elastic body, resistant to fire, *spider climb* at will, special *dimension door* ability, detect invisible creatures by smell, weapon attacks at –1 per die of damage; AL CN; MM2/20.

An expanded and detailed description of the boggle's *dimension door* power is given at the end of this adventure. Nik-Nik may use some or all of the tactics mentioned in this description if the DM rules it possible. If he is caught or seen, Nik-Nik sends up a high-pitched wailing to alert the others that he's in danger and needs assistance.

6. Chinpot's Cover. Chinpot is placed here in as central a location as possible. His task is to wait until he hears Nik-Nik's alarm call, then wade in to attack the PCs. Otherwise, he's to wait until Zazzafizzlezizzle gives him the signal to slide down the brook at area 9.

Chinpot went into partnership with Tuggut because of their lack of successes with their own tribe in the hills. Their earlier tactics made them look like comedy villains rather than the fearsome monsters they believed themselves to be. Travelers only laughed at their method of surprising a victim by shouting "Boo!" as the cyclopskin tripped over each other and fell out onto the path. Chinpot would then deliver his famous "Hand-over-yer-goodies-or-face-the-consequences" speech, which had no effect whatsoever, and the two would slink off (or be chased off) to hide their embarrassment in the woods with nothing to show for their brilliant plans. Their fortunes have improved greatly since the boggle, quickling, and needlemen came along, though the strange, silent nature of the needlemen unnerves the two cyclopskin considerably.

Chinpot, the cyclopskin: AC 3; MV 12; HD 5; hp 34; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg by weapon type (+2 strength bonus); AL CN; halberd; MM2/27. The comparatively benign behavior of the cyclopskin makes their alignment chaotic neutral instead of chaotic evil, as per their fellows.

7. Tuggut's Cover. The cyclopskin **Tuggut** (hp 14; club, slingshot (as per sling), uses stones from ground; see Chinpot's statistics, area 6) is stationed here to counter any unexpected bravery on the part of the PCs, should the plan fail and the PCs discover the bandits. He is to present them with slingshot missile fire (at –2 to hit) as they are about to close with the other bandits. When he stands up, Tuggut can see over the scrub well enough to find all PCs over 5' in height. If no alarm is sounded, he has orders to sit tight until the retreat signal is given by the quickling.

This sounds simple, but then, so is Tuggut. He's already forgotten the agreed-upon retreat signal by the time the ambush is set up, and he's too embarrassed to ask any of the others what it's supposed to be. In fact, the signal is Zazzafizzlezizzle speeding over to tell him to hurry up, but Tuggut can't remember that. He keeps popping his head out of cover (10% chance per hour that one of the PCs will see him) to check that the others haven't sneaked off without him.

8. More Needlemen. The last two **needlemen** (hp 19, 16; see needlemen in area 4) are hidden in the undergrowth to guard the path as it loops around this area. They have orders to fire on travelers who decide to ignore the clearing and continue on down the path to the east. Like their brothers, these needlemen are 50% likely to fire on elves despite changes in plans or orders from the quickling.

9. Escape Route Downstream. This is the area through which the quickling intends the bandits to escape, either in retreat or victory, if everything goes according to plan and the PCs leave the glade without missing any of their stolen gear. If combat goes against the bandits, they try to force their way through to this area, using their various strengths, spells, etc., to beat a watery retreat downstream.

The Ambush

As there is a water supply nearby and a clean campsite, the PCs should have little hesitancy in resting in the clearing. Meanwhile, the bandits lie in wait all around the unsuspecting group.

The boggle can successfully steal a bag of gold, a magical item, or some similar thing from a sleeping, stunned, or prone character if he can roll to hit AC 5. Add +2 to this roll if the attempt is made in total darkness, –2 if the PC is sitting or standing, and –4 if the PC is on his guard. There is a 1-in-4 chance that Nik-Nik (or his disembodied arms or head) will be detected each time he fails to successfully steal something. Nik-Nik will take no more than two items from any individual before moving on to repeat his efforts with another victim.

The danger of failure for the NPCs comes not only from the boggle but also from the needlemen, with their penchant for attacking elves, and from a nervous Tuggut, who keeps peeping out from cover and has a 10% chance per hour of being detected.

The bandits' tactics rely on the confusion caused by Zazzafizzlezizzle's spells and the missile fire from the needlemen and Tuggut's sling. Actual melee is used only as a last resort, if the gang is unable to make a clean getaway.

In the event the bandits are successful in stealing items without detection, there is a 25% chance they will try again if the PCs stay more than six hours in the glade. The DM may also have the gang encounter the PCs in another ambush as the adventurers continue on their way through the woods.

If Grikloon, the forlarren, is accused of complicity in the thefts, he immediately attacks his accuser. He has no knowledge of the bandits and would neither join the gang nor warn the PCs if he did know about the monsters.

There is one condition under which the bandits will stay and fight. If the PCs visibly possess 3,000 gp or more in coin or goods, the gang will try to use force to get the treasure, fleeing only if half are slain or incapacitated.

(continued on page 58)

Boggle Behavior

A boggle may use his *dimension door* power at will through any complete frame. A frame may be a doorframe, three or more branches tied together or overlapping, or even the legs of a standing character (the ground completes the third side of this particular frame). This power may be used only if there is a second frame—a receiving frame—within the 30-yard range, though each frame allows movement in both directions and to other frames in range. The boggle cannot see through a frame by looking through another frame within range, but he remains aware of the location of all suitable frames within his 30-yard radius.

The boggle may pass all or part of his body through a sending frame. His hands, for example, may appear 20' away to strike at someone. As the boggle always targets a receiving frame, he is not subject to the risk of arriving in a solid area (as a wizard casting a *dimension door* spell might) or being stranded on the Astral plane. Recovery from the use of this special *dimension door* power is instantaneous for the boggle.

The boggle may use such a *dimension door* to transport anything he is touching or carrying. A person or object must be in physical contact with the boggle to pass through the *door.* Therefore, a boggle may not push a victim through a *door* but could easily drag one through (if "pushing" is taken to mean letting go of the victim after the initial shove, while "dragging" implies holding on tightly).

A boggle is quite strong, being able to carry his own weight (about 90 lbs.) plus an additional 20 lbs. A being weighing 90 lbs. or less may be pulled off balance by a boggle if the victim is surprised and fails a dexterity check on 1d20. A sleeping PC of the proper size automatically fails this roll.

If the person grabbed makes a dexterity check on 1d20, he may attempt to roll his bend bars/lift gates strength roll to break out of the boggle's grasp, but a boggle will let go immediately 80% of the time if he fails to off-balance a victim in one attempt.

Anyone who is partially or wholly dragged through a boggle's *dimension door* and fails a saving throw vs. petrification will be stunned for three rounds, during which time the boggle may rifle his victim's pockets, seek a fresh victim, or physically attack. A character so stunned will revive the melee round after being struck and injured, so a boggle usually chooses to steal from rather than attack a stunned victim. An exception to this is made if the character has done damage to the boggle, in which case there is a 50% chance that the vengeful creature will bite or otherwise damage his captive. If the victim is outnumbered by boggles while stunned, each boggle gets a free attack in the melee.

A particularly vengeful (or malicious) boggle may place potentially lethal objects through a *door.* Emptying a pot of live scorpions near a sleeping character is an example of a boggle's spite.

A boggle may elect to leave a victim stranded between two *doors* (such as having a victim's legs stick out one frame while his head and upper body stick out another frame yards away!). If this happens, the victim is stuck until someone casts a *dispel magic* spell on him. Casting of this spell automatically catapults the trapped character through one *door* (50% chance for either one), with the normal chance of being stunned if a save vs. petrification is unsuccessful.

Unless a character stuck between *doors* completely fills the gaps inside the frame, he is no impedance to a boggle wishing to use those *doors.* A character so trapped must have a weapon in hand in order to get a swipe at a boggle "just passing through."

A character caught between *doors* has a 10% chance per day of attracting the attention of some monster from the Astral plane, who is 70% likely to attack those portions of the victim's body showing through onto that plane. Boggles pass through the Astral plane instantly and are never in danger from any Astral creatures.

(continued from page 3)

A Job Well Done

I've been a subscriber to DUNGEON Magazine since issue #4, and in my opinion, Paul Hancock's "Chadranther's Bane" (issue #18) is truly one of the most inspirational pieces ever to be published. This unique perspective that I shared with my fellow players was one of the most enjoyable and challenging quests experienced by our group in quite some time. My hat is off to Paul Hancock on a job well done, and I hope to see more of his modules in future issues of DUNGEON.

I would also like to address a point of interest that is of importance to me and others as well. For many months now, I've been reading about how some of the players resent solo and Oriental adventures being published in DUNGEON Magazine. The only thing I have to say to these individuals is that they should recognize their selfish demands for what they are . . . severely narrow minded and unrealistic.

To the staff of DUNGEON Magazine: Keep on doing what you all do best.

Christian Lee Gorde
Tacoma, Washington

Magical Inventory

I run DUNGEON adventures a lot, and although I cut out a considerable amount of treasure and magical items, characters still seem to be winding up with too much of both. I'm not sure what to do, but could you please list the items of a couple 6th- or 7th-level character classes to give me and other DMs an idea of how much characters should have.

Rich Minma
Hubbard, Ohio

Each DM should decide how much monetary and magical treasure is appropriate for his campaign. Some campaigns work quite well with lots of money, lots of magic, and high-level characters. Some work well with little magic, average amounts of money, and generally low-level characters. The best levels of magic, money, and PC strength depend on the threats facing the PCs. If the PCs regularly face poorly or moderately armed opponents of relatively low levels, magic and money rewards should be on the low side. If the PCs are hard-pressed by powerful opponents armed with magical weapons, spells, and numerous other resources (fortresses, armies, etc.), then the PCs should likewise be heavily armed.

Suppose you have a group of five 6th-level PCs, of mixed classes (mostly fighters). These PCs have no established base and typically fight lots of orcs, low-level undead, and wild animals such as wolves. The PCs shouldn't have more than one magical weapon apiece (if they have any), and it is doubtful that they should use or need magical armor. A few potions and scrolls might be in use, and a miscellaneous magical item or two might be held by the group as a whole. If the group has more than this, the players are going to be bored.

Say the same group of adventurers soon enters a new phase of the campaign in which frost giants (in increasing numbers) attack human settlements near a mountain range. The frost giants are backed up by shaman giants, and they travel in groups of 2-5. The PCs might make good use of two or three magical weapons, a suit of magical armor, and two or more other magical devices apiece, as the level of the opposition is now considerably greater than the party's own power level.

The main problem, however, is that PCs hoard valuable items. If the PCs in your campaign seem to be getting too much treasure, try one or more of the following:

1. Give the PCs fewer treasures, so they cannot hoard more items or money.

2. Increase the cleverness of the opposition, making the opponents more difficult to defeat simply because they are being more tricky (not necessarily more powerful in terms of hit dice or magical devices carried).

3. Follow encumbrance rules, carrying-capacity rules, and the like very closely, so PCs cannot drag their hoards with them.

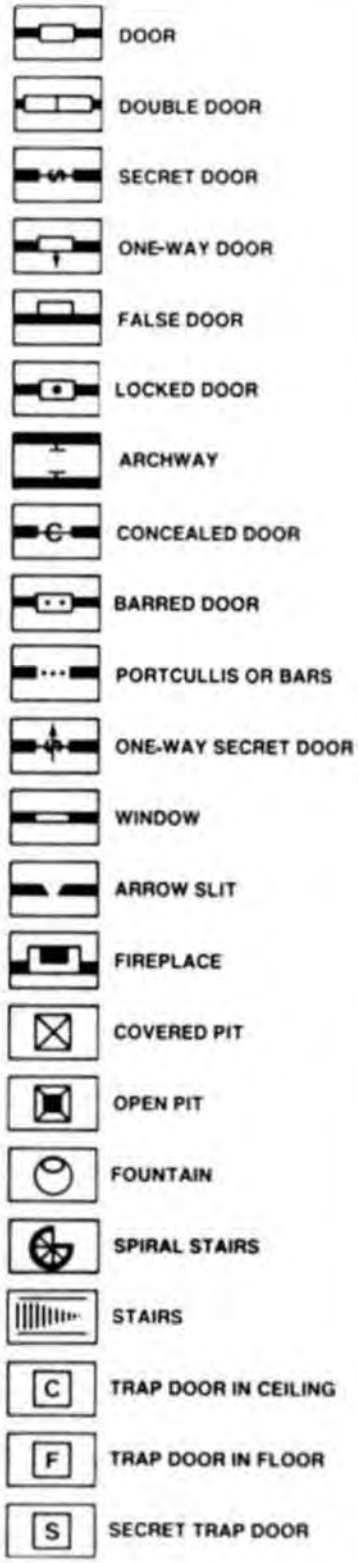
4. Consider having word of the PCs' wealth spread, introducing (or increasing the frequency of) thieves, tax collectors, etc.

5. Offer options to the PCs to allow them to spend their wealth or donate extra magical items to third parties for favors.

In short, if your campaign works with rich, dangerous, low-level PCs, fine. The PCs' powers should be about the same as (perhaps even less than) that of their opposition in order to be interesting. Ω

MAP SYMBOLS

These symbols are used on most maps in DUNGEON® Adventures.



HOUSE OF CARDS

BY RANDY MAXWELL

It's up to you to bring it tumbling down.

Artwork by George Barr

Randy says, "I've always wanted to include a deck of many things *in a module as a tangible item of treasure. Rather than just telling a player he's got something, the DM can actually give him something. This module was also inspired by the entry on Westgate in the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Campaign Set. It's a textbook case of one idea leading to another . . . and another . . . and another."*

"House of Cards" is an AD&D® adventure for 4-6 characters of levels 9-12 (about 52 total levels). A balanced party containing at least one cleric and one thief is recommended. The adventure is set in the city of Westgate from the boxed FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Set. Names, locales, and NPCs can be changed to suit any existing campaign. Areas mentioned in the text that are keyed to the map of Westgate on page 90 of the *Cyclopedia of the Realms* have the letter "W" in front of the area number to avoid confusion with like-numbered areas in the module itself.

It must be noted that though most of this module has been set up to fit with the AD&D 2nd Edition rules, there are a few places in which the 1st Edition rules are referenced. These sections may either be changed or used as they are at the DM's discretion (e.g., the description of One-Eyed Jax in "The Shore Patrol," the spell defense of the temple at area 36, and the notes on disease in area 41B of the dungeon). Nearly all monsters are referenced in 1st Edition texts. Spells and powers found only in the 1st Edition texts (e.g., *alter reality* spell, psionics) may also be kept, changed, or ignored.

This module uses a magical item, the *deck of many things*, as both trap and treasure (see the AD&D 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*, pages 166-167). DMs are advised to become thoroughly familiar with the deck and the restrictions placed on it for use with this module. These restrictions have been applied to avoid possible confusion in interpreting the results of some of these cards.

A full 22-card *deck of many things* is illustrated in black and white at the end of this adventure. If you'd like to know more about this intriguing magical item and get a copy of the deck in color on durable cardstock, see the August issue (#148) of DRAGON® Magazine. DMs can use either deck to add realism to this module as the adventurers discover the cards while they explore the dungeons below Westgate.

Adventure Background

The PCs are in Westgate for a special celebration, either the Midwinter, Greengrass, Midsummer, Higharvestide, or Feast of the Moon festival (consult the *Cyclopedia of the Realms,* page 6, for the times of year of these festivals). The PCs may also be in town to negotiate a trade deal with one of the powerful merchant families of Westgate, mixing a little business with their pleasures. Due to the dictates of varying campaigns, DMs are, of course, free to invent their own reasons for the PCs' presence in Westgate.

Anyone stopping in Westgate for more than a day will immediately be aware that all is not well with the city. There are clashes in the night between rival gangs and the militia. As any tavern barkeep can relate, a few months ago these battles were small fights with only a dozen or so participants and lasting only 5-10 minutes or until the arrival of the militia. Recently, these riots have turned into full-scale street warfare, with a hundred or more gang members on each side and battles lasting many hours. In these cases, the militia can do little more than confine the area of battle and warn people away. It is common knowledge that the two warring gangs are actually two thieves' guilds; the powerful Night Masks and the less powerful Shore Patrol are fighting it out for control of the city.

There were, and still are, many calls for action against the warring gangs, but the Lords of Westgate have been reluctant to take any significant steps, being far more interested in trade, tariffs, and other mercantile pursuits than in quelling the nightly disturbances. The local guilds have taken matters into their own hands and called a general strike, their only demand being that the lords do something about the nightly warfare in Westgate. Without workers to load and unload ships, stock the warehouses, man the mule trains, and make the goods, the merchants have suffered financially. The merchant lords have posted notices announcing a bounty of 10,000 gp from each of the nine major merchant families, with an additional 10,000 gp from the local guilds and lesser merchants. This is a cool 100,000 gp for anyone able to put a stop to the nightly warfare. There are, however, some restrictions on claiming this bounty:

—Criminals may not hunt criminals. Bounty hunters must be approved by the militia. This is to ensure that powerful, evil, and unscrupulous parties are not set loose upon the citizens of Westgate. Bounty hunters not so approved are not eligible for the bounty, even if they end the fighting in the city.

—Large numbers of mercenaries may not be hired. The merchants and the guilds don't want to replace one set of warring gangs with another.

—One of the established gangs may not be used as mercenaries. The merchants don't want powerful bounty hunters to come in and take over the gangs. They feel such a cure is worse than the problem.

—Sections of the city may not be razed by fire or mighty spells. The guild masters have promised another general strike if dues-paying guild members are burned out of their homes.

—No wild accusations. The merchants don't want anyone's reputation ruined (especially their own) by bounty hunters making wild, unproven claims. If a bounty hunter makes an accusation, he should be prepared to prove it or forfeit any chance at the bounty.

—Information may not be gained by torture or magic without prior approval by the militia. This restriction prevents overzealous bounty hunters from hurting innocent citizens. A well-publicized local law forbids the casting of spells on unwilling persons. Should any bounty hunter be reported for such spell-casting, he will be asked to leave Westgate and be declared ineligible to receive the bounty.

—Don't rely on the militia to get you out of trouble. The militia has enough to do and cannot be expected to help every adventurer who gets into hot water because of the bounty.

Failure to abide by these restrictions means automatic forfeiture of the bounty. Violations of some of these restrictions (especially torturing citizens or burning down sections of the city) may be punished by death.

The PCs may contact members of either the Shore Patrol or the Night Masks at many of the local taverns and inns. Known Night Mask hangouts are: the Purple Lady (area W22), the Black Boot (area W38), the Rising Raven (area W41), and the Old Beard (area W45). Known Shore Patrol hangouts are: the Leaning Man (area W3), Lilda's (area W7), the Empty Fish (area W18), and the Spitting Cockatrice (area W17). Members of either gang can be found in the dungeons of the Tower (area W32). Militiamen can be found at the Tower, but can be interviewed more privately at the Black Eye (area W49).

Interviews with members of either gang or the militia will reveal little that is not already public knowledge, and all sides will declare they are in the right. The Night Masks claim the Shore Patrol is trying to run them out of town and take over Westgate. The Shore Patrol claims the opposite is true. Information, whether useful or not, must be purchased. Night Mask members are extremely closemouthed about anything other than how utterly despicable the Shore Patrol is. Unless gang members are doing something illegal, the PCs cannot round up, arrest, or bother them in any way.

For the Dungeon Master

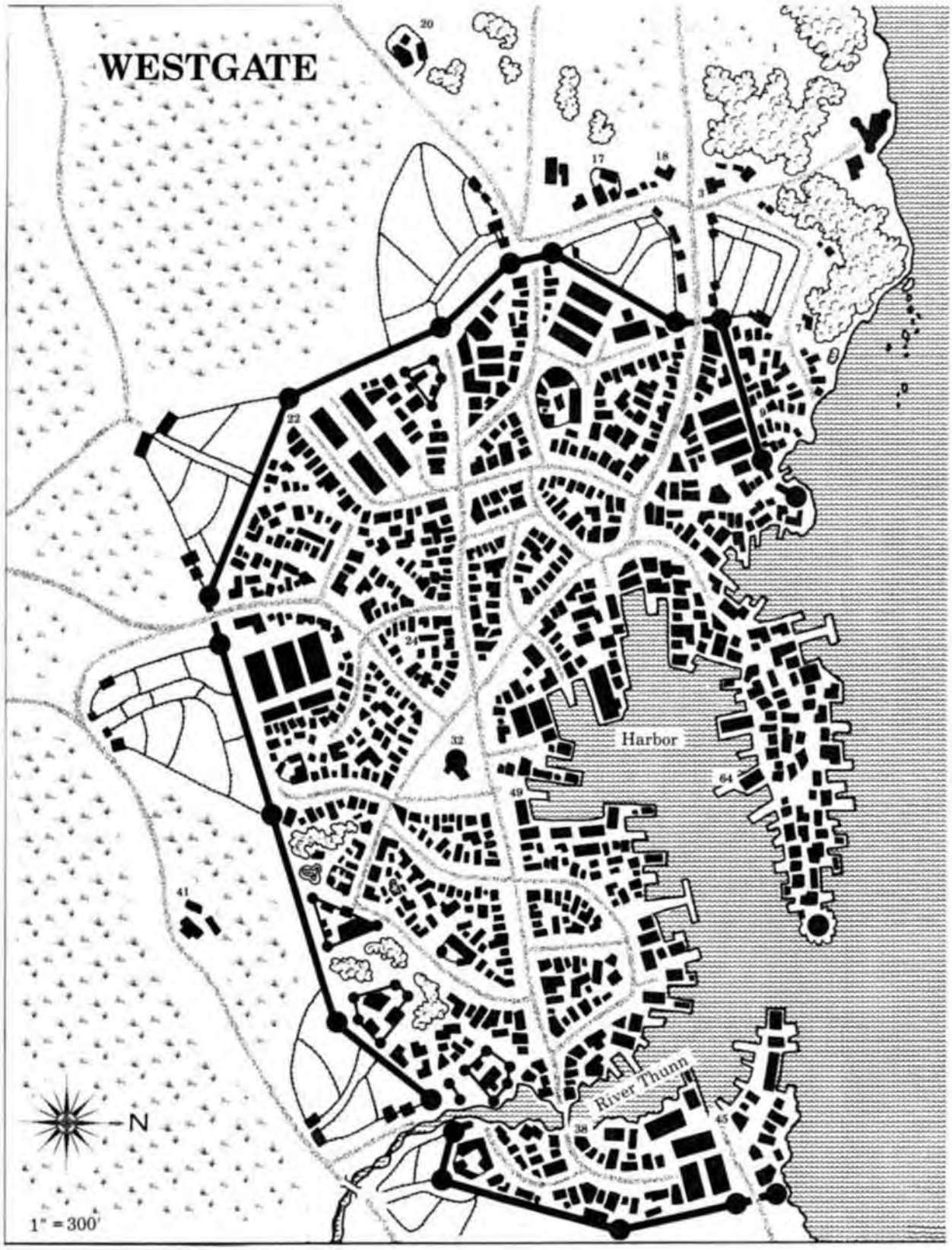
The nightly warfare in Westgate is caused by the Night Masks' attempt to take over the city. The Night Masks have steadily encroached on the territory of the Shore Patrol, a large but loosely structured criminal organization. The Night Masks are attempting to either incorporate Shore Patrol members into their ranks or drive them from the city. The Shore Patrol is fighting to remain independent and free of what they regard as an overly restrictive upstart thieves' guild. Most battles have been fought on the north side of town, near the Shore (area W9). However, there have been a number of battles near the docks around the harbor, and many minor skirmishes even in the heart of the city. The battles are not well-planned encounters but unrestrained free-for-alls, with each side taking to the streets after sunset. About 50 men have been slain so far in the fighting.

If the PCs wish to declare themselves after the bounty, they will be automatically approved by the militia unless the PCs are very notorious bandits or heinous criminals of some kind. The adventuring party's name and sigil will be registered in a ledger. Without this registration, the party will not receive the bounty even if successful.

Armies of the Night

The Night Masks

Of the armies of the night battling for control of the city, the Night Masks are by far the most threatening to the future of Westgate. The Night Masks are more


WESTGATE
Harbor
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N
1" = 300'

than just a thieves' guild; they are a religious organization dedicated to establishing an unholy city dedicated to Mask, the neutral-evil god of thieves and intrigue (see the *Cyclopedia of the Realms*, page 12).

A year ago, Mask sent his personal lieutenant to help prepare the special shrine and temple that will consecrate the city in his name. The lieutenant is Phagen, an arcanadaemon of considerable power. Phagen has brought a number of other daemons with him as guards and servants.

The Night Masks have 500 members ordered into a well-structured organizational hierarchy. The members are divided into three cadres: the Deys of Night, the Sultans of Sunset, and the Midnight Maharajas. The different Night Mask cadres and groups use an assortment of ranks and titles, not so much to denote actual status as to confuse outsiders attempting to discern their organizational structure.

The Deys are the lowest rank and form the general labor pool for the Night Masks. Deys are low-level thieves and fighters who make up the bulk of the membership, the backbone of the Night Masks. The Sultans are the mid-level thieves, fighters, and wizards who organize and lead the five-man *cinques* (see "Modus Operandi"). The Maharajas are the mid- to high-level members, predominantly clerics of Mask and thieves, but all classes are represented. The Maharajas are the planners, organizers, and managers of the day-to-day affairs of the Night Masks. They only occasionally go out on "jobs," and then only when some high-level ability, spell, or expertise is needed. Because of the wide range of classes and levels for Sultans and Maharajas, DMs must create their own as needed (see area 8, Sanctuary of Mask, for representative Sultans and a Maharaja). DMs can use the following statistics for the more common Night Mask members:

Typical Dey of Night fighter: AC 7; MV 12; F1-3; hp 6/level; #AT 1; THAC0 20-18; Dmg by weapon type; AL NE; short sword, dagger, leather armor, shield.

Typical Dey of Night thief: AC 8; MV 12; T1-4; hp 4/level; #AT 1; THAC0 20-19; Dmg by weapon type; AL NE; leather armor, short sword, dagger.

Modus Operandi. The Night Masks operate in groups of five called *cinques*. A cinque receives instructions from a masked Sultan or Maharaja. If caught, a cinque member can thus endanger no more than his particular cinque; all others remain safe. In fighting the Shore Patrol, the Night Masks use only the Deys of Night. They do not want to risk higher-level members in street brawls. In addition, they are worried that should higher-level members begin revealing themselves in street fights, the militia would be forced to retaliate.

The Night Masks are ruled by a council of five called the Pentad. But, since Phagen's coming, the Pentad must answer to the arcanadaemon. Each member of the Pentad controls a particular sphere of the Night Masks' activities. Should any of the Pentad be killed or revealed to the general public, it would be a serious blow to the Night Masks' plans. The Pentad are fanatical followers of Mask and, if cornered and no escape is possible, will fight to the death. Members of the Pentad are:

Tayker Palehand: AC 3; MV 3 or 12 (see below); C10; hp 39; #AT 1 at –2; THAC0 16 (includes penalty); Dmg by spell or weapon type; AL NE; spells: *cause light wounds; curse; darkness; sanctuary; dust devil; hold person; silence, 15' radius; wyvern watch; animate dead; cause disease; dispel magic; detect lie; giant insect; protection from good, 10' radius; dispel good, raise dead.* Tayker wears chain mail and a *ring of protection +2*, and is armed with a mace. He always carries a potion of *polymorph self* and a scroll of *protection from magic*. When fighting, he immediately uses his scroll of *protection*, but uses the potion only if his chariot is rendered useless. He assumes the form of a normal man with legs when *polymorphed*.

Tayker lost both legs in an acid trap while adventuring in his youth. The same accident bleached his right hand stark white, whereby he derives his surname. Tayker's injuries have never been *regenerated* because Tayker's deity, Mask, gives the reverse version of the spell only. He can move about slowly using his arms and hands (MV 3). Tayker's preferred method of locomotion is a special chariot pulled by two golden lions (MV 12). The two golden lions are, in fact, *figurines of wondrous power*. Due to his lack of lower limbs, Tayker attacks with a weapon at –2 on to-hit rolls and always attacks last in a round, because he must wait for an opponent to come to him. The –2 penalty applies to Tayker's normal form and for normal weapon use only. Tayker's attacks in *polymorphed* form, with spells, or with his chariot are made normally.

Golden lions: AC 5/6 (4/5 in harness); MV 12; HD 5+2; hp 25 each; #AT 3; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-10; SA rear claws for 2-7/2-7; SD surprised only on a 1; AL N; MM1/61. The lions obey only Tayker and, being magical creations, are immune to mind-influencing magicks such as *charm, hold,* and *animal friendship* spells. When wearing the leather harness to pull the chariot, the lions receive +1 to their armor class (as war horses' leather barding). The harnesses are independent of each other. If one lion is killed or rendered unable to pull the chariot, Tayker need only pull a slide bolt on the front of the chariot to be free of the burden. If the chariot is pulled by only one lion, movement is reduced to 9. If Tayker is killed, the lions immediately revert to statue form.

Tayker's chariot is very low to the ground and has a wide wheelbase (4' from wheel to wheel, 6' wide overall). It has AC 4 and 25 hp. The chariot is made of fire-tempered wood, and all fire-based attacks do only half damage. Lightning and cold-based attacks do no damage to the chariot but may affect the rider. The chariot is very light and maneuverable, and adds +2 to the armor class of anyone riding in it. The outer sides of both solid wooden wheels have a dozen foot-long dagger blades imbedded in them. When Tayker attacks with the chariot, he attempts to slash his opponents' legs with the daggered wheels as he races by. This requires a normal to-hit roll. If a hit is scored, 1-4 daggers hit the opponent for 2-5 hp damage each (because the blades are mounted on a rotating wheel, they do additional rending damage).

Tayker very rarely leaves the Sanctuary of Mask (see that section of the adventure for details), and then only in *polymorphed* form. He is the internal security officer of the Night Masks, responsible for assuring that no outsiders are allowed into the sanctuary. He is also responsible for disciplining members for any rules transgressions. He interrogates prisoners and intruders, often using the golden lions to torture and torment victims. He is dour, suspicious, and has a heart as cold as white dragon's breath.

Dhejja Vhammos: AC 3; MV 12; T12; hp 43; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg by weapon type; D 18; I 18; AL NE; *leather armor*

+1, hand-held crossbow, 20 bolts, short sword.

Dhejja, twin sister to Lord Thontal (head of the Vhammos family), is the strategist for the Night Masks. She personally plans or approves plans for all major crimes. Dhejja is also warden of the Watch Dock (area W64), where captured pirate ships and seized goods are kept. Ship and cargo inspections also take place at the Watch Dock. In such a position, Dhejja can easily allow the Night Masks to smuggle goods, individuals, and booty in and out of Westgate. As warden of the Watch Dock, Dhejja is captain of the harbor guard. As such, she is well known around town and would obviously have intimate knowledge of the comings and goings in the harbor. If interviewed by the PCs, she claims to know nothing about the warring gangs other than what is already common knowledge. If they ask, she allows the PCs to examine confiscated goods in the Watch warehouses.

Dhejja plays the part of a dutiful soldier of the city. She is observant, unscrupulous, and the epitome of the criminal genius. She is seldom within the Sanctuary of Mask and will be found there only for a meeting of the Pentad or some emergency. As Dhejja is both a high-ranking official of the militia in her own right and twin sister to a lord of Westgate, anyone bringing a charge against her must be very certain of the facts or plan on a quick exit from the city.

Cedric Cormyr: AC –1; MV 12; C13; hp 49; #AT 1; THAC0 12; Dmg by spell or weapon type; W 18; AL NE; spells: *cause fear; cause light wounds* (×2); *command; curse; detect good; protection from good; sanctuary; augury; chant; dust devil; enthrall; hold person; silence, 15' radius; withdraw; wyvern watch; animate dead; cause disease; cause paralysis; continual darkness; dispel magic; glyph of warding; speak with dead; cloak of fear; divination; free action; giant insect; protection from good, 10' radius; flame strike; plane shift; blade barrier; forbiddance.*

Cedric wears bronze *plate mail +2* and uses a *buckler +2*. He is armed with a *mace +1* and a *wand of steam and vapor.*

Cedric is the Night Masks' accountant. He balances the books and keeps track of all outgoing and incoming funds. Woe to the thief who attempts to shortchange the Night Masks! Cedric keeps a tight rein on expenses and a close eye on all operatives. Should any thief fail to turn over the required share of a job, Cedric will know of it. Such a thief would soon find himself being disciplined by the Pentad's ungentle internal security officer. Cedric is calculating, callous, and aloof. He spends his time equally between the known Temple of Mask (area W24) and the hidden Sanctuary of Mask.

Cedric has taken care not to use anything more powerful than a second-level spell while in public. Because of this, it is generally believed that Cedric is of only low- or mid-level ability. He is, therefore, not perceived as a serious threat by the clerics of other temples in Westgate. Also, the known temple of Mask is open to the public. The militia is welcomed at any time and has the permission of Cedric to search the temple whenever they choose. The known temple is, of course, nothing but camouflage. It is a facade presented to lull the people of Westgate into a sense of false security, while the real temple and intentions of Mask remain undiscovered.

If interviewed by the PCs, Cedric claims to know nothing about the unrest in the city. He points out that Mask is a deity concerned with intrigue, not vulgar street brawls. If pressed on the matter, Cedric begins to deliberately bore the PCs with lectures on the relationship of a cleric to his deity and other obscure religious details.

Hildegard Bombaster: AC 5; MV 12; M12; hp 45; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg by spell or weapon type; D 17, C 18, I 18; AL NE; spells: *charm person, comprehend languages, identify, sleep, forget, invisibility, know alignment, ray of enfeeblement, clairaudience, clairvoyance, hold person, water breathing, dimension door, extension I, minor globe of invulnerability, polymorph self, animate dead, contact other plane, passwall, sending, invisible stalker.*

Hildegard wears a *cloak of protection +2* and a *medallion of ESP* (30' range). She carries a normal dagger, a *gem of seeing,* and a *wand of conjuration.*

Hildegard is the owner of the Gatereach Inn (area W20). The inn is of good quality, giving Hildegard respectable standing in the town. It is common knowledge in town that Hildegard is a mage, but it is believed she is of low-level ability. She will occasionally cast *dancing lights* or *ventriloquism* spells to amuse customers, but no one other than members of the Night Masks has seen her use anything greater than a first-level spell, and she does not use her magical items in public. Hildegard is rowdy, boisterous, and gregarious. She takes care that no criminal activity takes place at the Gatereach. If interviewed, she claims to know nothing more than what is public knowledge.

Hildegard is the recruiting officer for the Night Masks. It is her job to test all new members. She uses her information and detection spells, as well as her *medallion of ESP,* to give new recruits the once-over to make sure they are who they say they are. She is the only member of the Night Masks who can identify all other members. It is because of Hildegard's careful scrutiny of applicants that no one has ever successfully planted a spy in the ranks of the Night Masks. If the PCs attempt to join the Night Masks, they will be interviewed by Hildegard, who will automatically reject anyone she cannot *ESP* or whose alignment she cannot discern.

The Night Masks' recruitment process is as follows. After sundown, the new recruit is taken by four **Dey of Night fighters** (hp 15, 14, 12, 11) in a small boat far out into the Sea of Fallen Stars. The recruit may take nothing but the clothes on his back—absolutely no friends, weapons, armor, or magical items of any kind. The boat makes a rendezvous with another small craft containing Hildegard and four more **Dey fighters** (hp 20, 16, 15, 14). Hildegard carefully disguises herself for these interrogations, so only members of the Pentad can identify her.

If Hildegard rejects an applicant for any reason, he is simply tossed over the side into the sea. Should the rejected applicant be reluctant to go swimming and a fight breaks out, Hildegard immediately boards the other vessel and lets the fighters slug it out. If a PC applying for Night Mask membership should quickly overcome the fighters and attack Hildegard, she casts her *water breathing* spell and disappears beneath the waves, with no chance of finding or tracking her once she is underwater. Even if the PC-applicant has somehow recognized Hildegard, there is no way to prove it was she. Hildegard has several witnesses ready to testify that she had nothing to do with the incident. As noted under the bounty restrictions, PCs must be careful about their accusations.

Oswald Guldar: AC 2; MV 12; F12; hp 49; #AT 1; THAC0 9; Dmg by weapon type; AL NE; *chain mail +3, sword +2.*

Oswald is the bastard son of Lord Dathguld, head of the Guldar family, who regard Oswald as something of an embarrassment and treat him accordingly. Oswald's loyalties are decidedly with the Night Masks and not with his family. Oswald is external security officer for the Night Masks.

As second in command of the town militia, he is responsible both for making sure no one discovers what the Night Masks are up to, and for keeping the town militia's interference to a minimum. From this excellent position, Oswald keeps his fellow Pentad members informed of the militia's upcoming actions. He also has full knowledge of the contents of various warehouses and the comings and goings of valuable merchandise, as many merchants want militia protection for their wares and valuables. In his position, Oswald has no problem in silencing (through threat, violence, or poison) any captured Night Masks who attempt to swap information for their freedom.

Oswald is a schemer and is constantly on the lookout for any opportunity that will advance the Night Masks and his own status therein. He keeps an eye on the PCs and any other bounty hunters in Westgate but refuses to be interviewed by any bounty hunters, claiming to be too busy.

Note: The DM must be prepared to improvise any encounter with a member of the Pentad while the PCs are within Westgate. Pentad members should go out of their way to avoid being identified as such, and they will act in all ways as the people they are commonly believed to be.

The Shore Patrol

The Shore Patrol is not a proper thieves' guild but a loose confederation of street gangs, thieves, thugs, and outcasts of all sorts. They number around 400, and their primary concern is making a gold piece the fastest and easiest way possible. Their problems with the Night Masks have nothing to do with their rival's plans for Westgate, but with the fact that the Night Masks are forcibly crowding them out of the lucrative con game, extortion, and strong-arm rackets.

The Shore patrol has no acknowledged leader, but a spokesman for the group, One-Eyed Jax, can be found daily at Lilda's festhall (area W7). Jax was born and raised in the Shore area of Westgate. As a young man, he left the city to go off adventuring; he eventually became a powerful martial artist. He returned to Westgate two years ago, attempting to bring a small amount of law and order to the chaos of his hometown.

One-Eyed Jax: AC 3; MV 23; Monk 9; hp 25; #AT 2; THAC0 16; Dmg 3-12; S 15, D 16, C 12, I 11, W 15, Ch 17; SD immunity to disease, *haste,* and *slow* spells; 80% resistance to *ESP;* 50% resistance to *beguiling, charm, hypnosis,* and *suggestion* spells; able to regenerate 4-7 hp per day; AL LN; additional abilities: *speak with animals* and *speak with plants* as druids do, self-induced catalepsy for up to 18 turns. Use the rules for monks given in the 1st Edition *Players Handbook,* pages 30-32. Jax is unarmed and unarmored.

Jax lost his right eye in a back-alley brawl when he was a mere street urchin; this does not affect his fighting ability in the least. He hopes to convert the rowdy chaotic street gangs to more lawful behavior and, perhaps, lead one or two of the more promising members into the ascetic life of a monk. Jax never involves himself in criminal activity; he attempts to lead by example. Jax is known by everyone on the Shore and is considered a friend of, but not a member of, the Shore Patrol. Jax is willing to act as spokesman for the Shore Patrol only because it allows him to deal directly with the gangs. Jax acts as a kind of go-between for the Shore Patrol and anyone, including the militia, trying to get in touch with them. He is trusted by both the gangs and the town militia, with the exception of Oswald Guldar.

Jax has done a good deal of spying on the Night Masks. He can tell the PCs how to find the entrance to the Sanctuary of Mask (see area 1, DM's map for details), but he will demand that 10,000-gp worth of foodstuffs and medicines be donated to the people of the Shore before the information is given. Jax assumes there is a secret door somewhere in the entrance cave that leads to the Sanctuary of Mask. He does not know how to operate the entrance or what lies beyond.

If Jax needs assistance or feels there is a threat to the Shore beyond his own abilities to handle, he can muster 40 Shore Patrol members (70% fighters, 30% thieves) in two turns while in the city. These fighters and thieves help Jax out of personal friendship and loyalty. Once trouble starts, the noise of the battle attracts the attention of other Shore Patrol members, who arrive on the scene at a rate of 1-10 per turn.

If the PCs call upon Jax and his friends in the Shore Patrol for help, Jax demands one full share of any Night Mask treasure and a full share of the bounty as well. This demand is for Jax's help whether he is accompanied by Shore Patrol members or not. Jax and the Shore Patrol will act as allies but not as underlings for the PCs. They will fight intelligently and will not allow themselves to be used as trap bait or monster fodder.

If the PCs call upon Jax and the Shore Patrol to help defeat the Night Masks, it is technically a violation of the "no mercenaries" restriction placed upon the bounty. If the PCs and the Shore Patrol destroy the Night Masks, however, there is a 75% chance that the Lords of Westgate will ignore the violation and pay the bounty in the sheer delight of being free of the warring thieves' guilds. On the other hand, there is a 25% chance that delight will be tempered by greed, and the Lords of Westgate will refuse to pay the bounty.

Typical Shore Patrol fighter: AC 7; MV 12; F2-4; hp 6/level; #AT 1; THAC0 19-17; Dmg by weapon type; AL CN; leather armor, shield, short sword, hand axe, dagger.

Typical Shore Patrol thief: AC 8; MV 12; T2-4; hp 4/level; #AT 1; THAC0 20-19; Dmg by weapon type; AL CN; leather armor, short sword, dagger.

Modus Operandi. The Shore Patrol has no strict way of doing things. Several members may band together to loot a warehouse or stage a robbery, immediately dissolving the band as soon as the spoils are divided. In other cases, a gang may stay together for several jobs or even for several years. Planning for a caper is handled by the smartest member or the one with the most information concerning the target. Anyone with a good idea for acquiring a fast gold piece is the leader.

The Shore Patrol members are not organized fighters. However, due to the large number of experienced street gang members who make up the Shore Patrol, they are able to hold their own against the better-organized Night Masks. Membership in the Shore Patrol is gained only over a long period of time, through living and working in the Shore area and earning the trust of the community.

The Militia

The Westgate militia is composed of 150 permanent men-at-arms and 20 officers. It has an additional 150 semipermanent members for emergencies. The militia can call a general muster that will generate another 200 men-at-arms from the local shops and nearby farms. A citywide call to arms will mobilize the citizenry of Westgate, but only if the city is under siege and there is a clear and definite foe. Normally, 50 militiamen patrol the city streets and man the gates in eight-hour shifts. At present, due to the unrest in the city, 100 militiamen patrol Westgate night and day.

Modus Operandi. The militia is divided into three ranks, the Sun Watch, the Eve Watch, and the Star Watch. Militiamen are called by their watch names (e.g., soldier of the Sun Watch). The watches typically patrol in groups of five, while their officers stay in the Tower or at a gate. Each militiaman carries a loud, shrill whistle to call for assistance.

The captain of the Westgate militia is Asgood Finestone, who is known as the First Soldier of the City. Asgood is getting old and is far more interested in the administrative aspects of his job than in fighting. Meetings with Asgood are by appointment only, and appointments are arranged through Oswald Guldar (see "The Night Masks").

Asgood leaves the strategy and tactics of ending the violence to Oswald. This is one reason no major actions have been mounted against the gangs. Asgood's only command concerning the warring gangs is that the militia is, under no circumstances, to take sides with either of the warring parties. Much to the displeasure of Oswald, this command has been heartily backed by all the heads of the local merchant families. If the militia were to take sides, it would officially sanction one thieves' guild over the other. The merchant families want no part of an official thieves' guild and would prefer no thieves' guild at all.

The PCs will be unable to join the militia, as that organization has a backlog of applicants and is not looking for recruits of any level.

Asgood Finestone: AC 2; MV 12; F11; hp 61; #AT 3/2; THAC0 10; Dmg by weapon type; AL LN; *long sword +2,* hand axe, *dagger +2, plate mail +1, ring of protection +2.*

Typical soldier of the watch: AC 8; MV 12; F1-4; hp 6/level; #AT 1; THAC0 20-17; Dmg by weapon type; AL LN; leather armor, club, short sword or short bow.

The Sanctuary of Mask

The merchant families of Westgate have their own burial chambers under their castles. Over the years, these catacombs have been expanded to become quite extensive. In some cases, large areas of these crypts have been sealed off as unsafe, unusable, or unneeded. It is common practice for thieves to use the tombs and catacombs as lairs and bases of operations. Natural sinkholes, burrowing monsters, and graverobbers have opened up many areas of these catacombs. Thus, any mausoleum may have several entrances and exits completely unknown to its owners.

The Sanctuary of Mask is part of an ancient mausoleum of the Dhostar family. It was sealed off from the rest of the Dhostar catacombs some years ago because it had become unsafe and unusable. The family did not simply close and lock the door on this area. Entire tunnels were filled with rock and dirt. Some rooms and halls were collapsed deliberately. In this way, the tombs were thought to be rendered inaccessible.

Many of the laborers who worked on sealing the area were actually members of the Night Masks, and they made careful notes and maps for future reference. Using these notes and maps, Hildegard Bombaster was able to construct the *teleport* entrance and exit to the Sanctuary of Mask in Dhostar Vale (area W1).

The Night Masks have buttressed some unsafe sections and reworked others until the Sanctuary of Mask is fairly stable, sturdy, and safe for day-to-day use. It is not safe for powerful destructive spells, protracted heavy battles, or other structurally damaging actions. Adventuring parties attempting to blast their way through the walls of the Sanctuary of Mask using *dig, disintegrate, stone to flesh,* or other structurally damaging spells should be reminded that this area of the crypts was abandoned because it was unsound. There is a base 50% chance that anyone using such spells will cause stones in the walls and roof to fall, doing 6-36 hp damage to anyone beneath and possibly blocking a passage or tunnel. The chance of stones falling increases by 25% each time such a spell is used.

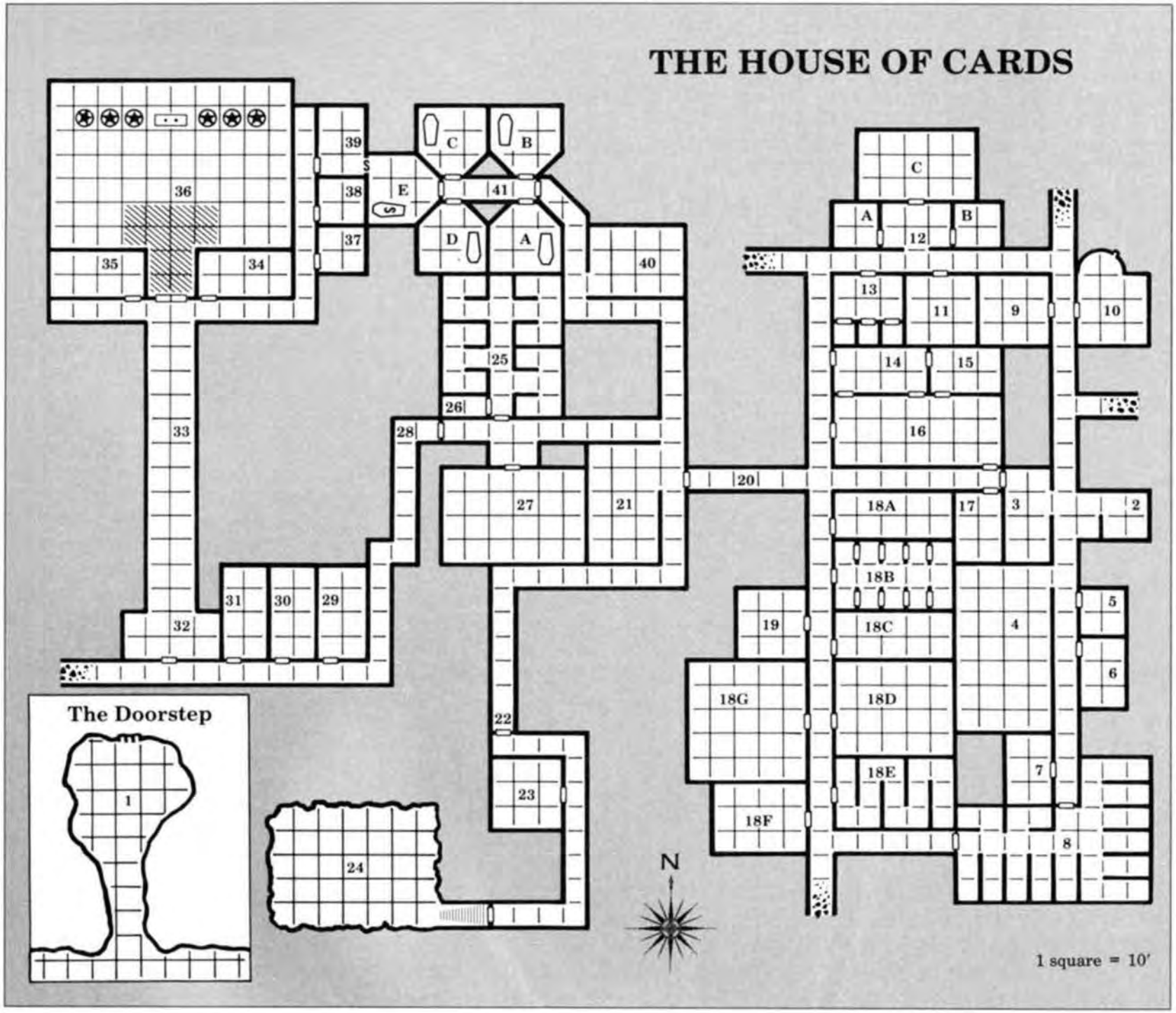
The Sanctuary of Mask is used by the Night Masks as a refuge, a warehouse for stolen property, and a safe place for planning crimes. It is also the meeting place for the Pentad. The Sanctuary of Mask is not a hangout or meeting place for the Night Masks in general. Any member of the Night Masks entering the Sanctuary of Mask must have a very good reason or authorization from one of the Pentad.

The Dhostar family is completely unaware that the tombs are being used as a thieves' guild headquarters. If so informed, the family will not be overly perturbed by the matter, as the section of the catacombs involved is no longer in use. The Dhostars tell the PCs to report the thieves to the militia.

The militia, however, will do nothing about this situation. Oswald Guldar states plainly, "The militia has more important things to do than run off and investigate every old root cellar someone thinks is important." Also, none of the other temples in Westgate will move against the Night Masks unless proof of their plans to make Westgate an unholy city can be established beyond doubt. This will most certainly require a thorough search of the entire underground complex.

Ceilings throughout the sanctuary are 10' high. Ventilation is poor; the air is always stale and musty. Due to the poor ventilation, rooms are lit with candles and lanterns. Torches create too much smoke for the closed environment. When the party enters, there are a total of 51 members of the Night Masks in the sanctuary, excluding any members of the Pentad who are present. There are 24 guards, 15 members of a group called the Shadow Society (see area 12 for details on this group), and 12 members of various classes and levels who are in hiding from the authorities. These defenders will fight to the death; they fear the Pentad more than any adventurers. Tayker Palehand is also in the Sanctuary of Mask. If the PCs enter the sanctuary after sunset, Cedric Cormyr will also be there. At any other time, he can be found at the known temple of Mask (area W24).

1. The Doorstep. In the forests of Dhostar Vale (area W1), at a point where the trees are closest to Castle Dhostar, there is a low hill covered with trees. On the south side of the hill is a small, shallow cave, its entrance covered over with vines, creepers, and brambles. The PCs


THE HOUSE OF CARDS
The Doorstep
1 square = 10'
N

must have information from One-Eyed Jax in order to find this cave. If the PCs have offended Jax or somehow made an enemy of him, they will have to acquire this information from some other source, perhaps a leader of one of the Shore Patrol's many gangs or a local lord, such as Lord Dathguld, head of the Guldar family. If all such attempts to gather information fail, the PCs may be forced to track Cedric Cormyr through the forest in order to find the entrance.

The Night Masks call this cave the Doorstep. It was once a tomb but now appears to be abandoned and is heavily coated with dirt, dust, and grime. The cave floor is covered with footprints, but nothing can be learned from them. The cave contains only a very dirty and worn-out blanket, a couple of grimy empty bottles, and a burned-out torch. In the northern wall are three holes, each just large enough to hold a torch. If torches are placed in any two of the holes, everything in a 10'×10' square in front of the holes is *teleported* to the Sanctuary of Mask, arriving at area 2. Any other arrangement of torches has no effect.

2. Arrival Point. This 20'×20' room is the arrival point of those *teleported* from the Doorstep to the sanctuary. They arrive in the center of the room, facing south. This is simply the arrival point and not another *teleport* room. The PCs must search the sanctuary for the *teleport* exit (area 10) or use their own means of *teleportation* to get out.

3. Guardroom. This room is always manned by four guardsmen (hp 22 each; see area 4 for complete statistics), who sit around a table playing cards and dicing. The open doorway to this room is directly across from the *teleport* arrival point, so the guards will be immediately aware of anyone *teleporting* into the Sanctuary of Mask. If they see intruders, the guards raise the alarm by striking a large gong, summoning 10 more guards from the barracks (area 4), who arrive in one round. Five of the remaining six guards arrive from one round to one turn later, depending on their locations in the sanctuary.

Tayker Palehand (area 10) and the Shadow Society (area 12) will not join in a general melee with the adventuring party, but will stalk them through the Sanctuary of Mask. Upon hearing the alarm, Tayker immediately sends a messenger (one of the six patrolling guards) to inform Cedric Cormyr that the sanctuary is under attack. Cedric then informs the others of the Pentad. Cedric, Oswald, and Dhejja, with their true identities well disguised, arrive at the sanctuary in 9-16 turns and help stalk the party. The disguises are non-magical but are extremely good. Unless a magical item, such as a *gem of seeing*, or a spell, such as *penetrate disguise* or *true seeing* is used, anyone viewing one of the disguised figures has only a 5% chance of discovering that person's true identity.

If Cedric is already in the sanctuary, he and Tayker stalk the party together (only Cedric is in disguise). The messenger sent by Tayker informs Oswald Guldar and he, in turn, tells Dhejja Vhammos what is going on. Guldar and Dhejja arrive together in 7-12 turns and help stalk the PCs.

Hildegard Bombaster will not defend the Sanctuary of Mask. Her job is to stay undercover, no matter what, and keep the Night Masks going should the sanctuary complex be destroyed.

4. Barracks. This room holds 20 cots and an equal number of small trunks. Down the center of the room runs a single large table with long benches for seating. This is the barracks for the sanctuary guard, made up of 24 fighters permanently assigned to the Sanctuary of Mask. They are led by three lieutenants and a captain, and are under the direct command of Tayker Palehand. These guards act as the police force for the sanctuary.

Guardsmen (20): AC 3; MV 6; F4; hp 27, 25 (×2), 22 (×14), 20 (×3); #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg by weapon type, AL NE; bronze plate mail, shield, short sword, short bow, dagger. Four guardsmen are always stationed in the guardroom (area 2), and six others patrol the sanctuary. The remaining 10 guards are always in the barracks.

5. Captain's Quarters. This room contains a comfortable bed, a large desk and chair, a small table with two chairs, a small chest, and a large trunk. A search of the desk reveals only mundane paperwork: listings of arms in the armory, reports from lieutenants, etc. The large trunk contains blankets and quilts; the small chest contains various personal belongings of the captain, including about 200 gp in various coins.

Captain: AC 1; MV 12; F8; hp 47; #AT 3/2; THAC0 13; Dmg by weapon type; S 18/76; AL NE; *plate mail +2, ring of protection +1, short sword +2, dagger +1.*

6. Lieutenants' Quarters. This room contains three cots, three small chests of personal belongings, a large table with four chairs, and a large trunk full of blankets and bedclothes. PCs searching through the small chests will find clothes, spare boots and belts, and 100 gp in various coins.

Lieutenants (3): AC 2; MV 6; F6; hp 38, 33, 29; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg by weapon type; AL NE; field plate armor, short sword, light crossbow, dagger.

7. Armory. The armory contains only weapons and armor usable by human thieves: 12 suits leather armor, 12 suits padded armor, six suits studded armor, two hand crossbows with 10 quarrels each, 20 daggers, a box of 50 darts, six long swords, six broad swords, 12 short swords, and 10 short bows with 24 arrows each. The arms and armor are of excellent quality and in mint condition. The Westgate militia will happily purchase any or all of this equipment for the prices listed on pages 68-69 of the 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*.

8. Sleeping Cells. These 10'×20' cells are virtually identical, each having a table and chair, a trunk, and a small cot. They offer no privacy and a bare minimum of comfort. The cells are occupied by 12 members of the Night Masks who are currently in hiding. When the alarm is sounded, they form a disorganized band and defend this area as best they can.

Sultans of Sunset thieves (6): AC 7; MV 9; T5; hp 24, 20 (×4), 16; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; AL NE; studded-leather armor, short sword, dagger.

Sultans of Sunset fighters (5): AC 4; MV 9; F7; hp 56, 45, 38 (×2), 34; #AT 3/2; THAC0 14; Dmg by weapon type; AL NE; chain mail, shield, long sword, hand axe, dagger.

Midnight Maharaja mage: AC 8; MV 12; M8; hp 21; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg by spell or weapon type; AL NE; spells: *magic missile, read magic, sleep, unseen servant, knock, web, wizard lock, fly, haste, hold person, fear, polymorph self.* He wears a *ring of protection +2* and is armed with six darts and a quarterstaff.

9. Meeting Room. This room contains a large square table surrounded by

chairs, and several smaller side tables. The entire western wall of the room is a huge map of Westgate. The room is obviously used for planning actions within the city. On the table is a large pile of papers. By looking through these, the PCs can discover the papers are primarily cargo manifests, warehouse inventories, and bills of lading. The Night Masks, it appears, are well aware of what is kept in the merchant families' sheds and warehouses.

10. Tayker's Quarters. This room contains a comfortable bed; a very low table with small cushions for sitting on the floor; a large trunk full of bedclothes; and a large chest full of various vestments, phylacteries, and ceremonial robes.

The northern wall contains a large alcove where Tayker parks his chariot. In the alcove is the one-way *teleport* out of the sanctuary. Anyone placing a torch in the small hole in the alcove wall is *teleported* back to the Doorstep (area 1). Placing the exit in Tayker's quarters assures that anyone leaving the sanctuary has authorization to do so. It also ensures that any enemies who have entered the Sanctuary of Mask cannot rapidly escape.

11. Treasury. This room contains recently stolen loot. Such items are stored here only until they can be sold. The Pentad converts most stolen property into coins, gems, or jewelry as soon as possible and deposits these in the main treasury (area 41E) in the House of Cards. Stolen coins, gems, and jewelry are also stored here but are removed weekly to the main treasury.

The room contains five small urns, each containing one of the following: 1,200 cp, 300 sp, 400 ep, 120 gp, 50 pp. There is a small chest with six gems worth 100 gp each, three pieces of jewelry worth 150 gp each, and a finely carved jade statue of a horse worth 1,000 gp. Only Tayker and Cedric have keys to this room.

The room is guarded by two ildriss grues. These grues, and all others found in this underground complex, have been conjured by Phagen, the arcanadaemon ruler of the Night Masks (see area 39 for full statistics on Phagen). The grues obey Phagen when he commands them directly but otherwise follow only the simple commands they have been given (e.g., protect this area only, pursue and kill all intruders, etc.).

Ildriss grues (3): AC 2; MV 3 as rolling fog, 24 otherwise (MC: A); HD 4; hp 20, 18, 16; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 3-12; SA attack first in any round, surprise on 4 in 6; SD +2 or better weapon to hit, immune to air-based or air-affecting spells; AL NE; MM2/73. The grues attack anyone other than a member of the Pentad who enters this room. They continue pursuit outside the room only if something has been taken from the area; otherwise, they are content to merely drive intruders from the treasury.

12. Shadow Society Area. The Shadow Society is Oswald Guldar's secret police force. Made up entirely of thieves and various hired killers, the Shadow Society does most of the spying and assassination work for the Night Masks. The Society is also used to spy on the guild's own members. The Shadow Society is an open secret among the Night Masks; everyone knows the organization exists, but no one is sure who is a member. Most Night Mask members refer to the society as the S.S.

The S.S. works primarily outside the Sanctuary of Mask, some members traveling far beyond Westgate in order to contact other thieves' guilds, conduct spy operations, and perform assassinations. While in the sanctuary, all S.S. members wear masks to keep their identities secret. The S.S. has a total membership of 50, but only 30 are stationed permanently in Westgate, and of those, only 15 are in the sanctuary at the moment. All others are abroad on business. The S.S. answers directly to Oswald Guldar, but day-to-day operations are handled by a commandant and two lieutenants. The main area is used as an office for planning, record keeping, and meetings.

12A. Commandant's Quarters. This room has a large comfortable bed, a wardrobe, and a table with two chairs. The wardrobe contains clothes, masks, and disguises used by the commandant.

S.S. Commandant: AC 3; MV 12; T9; hp 32; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg by weapon type; D 16; AL NE; *short sword +1*, dagger, *leather armor +3*.

12B. Lieutenants' Quarters. This room contains two cots, a large trunk, and two small locked chests. The trunk holds blankets and bedclothes. One of the small locked chests contains a scroll of *protection from magic* and a scroll of *protection from poison*. The other chest contains clothing and disguises.

S.S. Lieutenants (2): AC 6; MV 12; T7; hp 27, 22; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg by weapon type; AL NE; short sword, *dagger +1*. One of the two wears leather armor and a *ring of protection +2*, while the other wears *bracers of defense, AC 6*.

12C. S.S. Barracks. This room contains 20 cots, five large trunks, and 20 small chests. There is a large table down the center of the room with a long bench on each side. The trunks contain blankets and bedclothes for the barracks. The small chests contain personal belongings. Careful searching through the chests will uncover two full vials of acid, a vial of unholy water, and vial of poison.

S.S. Assassins (6): AC 7; MV 12; T5; hp 21, 18 (×4), 14; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; AL NE; short sword, dagger, studded leather armor.

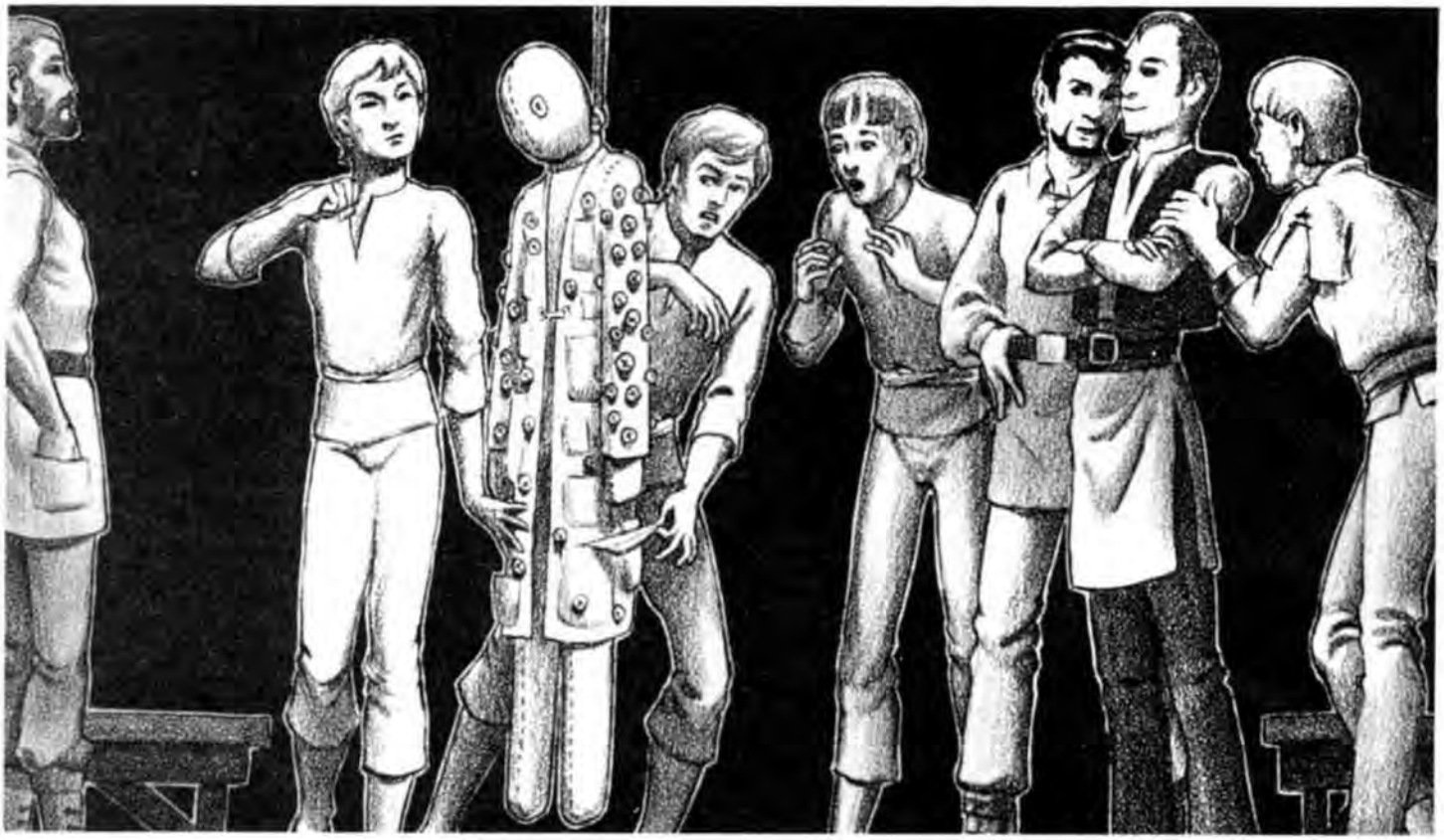
S.S. Thieves (6): AC 8; MV 12; T5; hp 20, 17 (× 5); #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; AL NE; short sword, dagger, padded armor.

13. Torture Chamber. This room is filled with various implements for inflicting pain. There are three small cells, empty at present, for holding victims. If any PCs are captured, they will soon occupy one of these cells. The room is used by both Tayker and the S.S. for punishing Night Mask members who break the rules, and for extracting information from the uncommunicative.

14. Kitchen. The kitchen is used primarily as a storage area for food. It contains no stoves, ovens, or fire pits. Only cold meals can be taken in the Sanctuary of Mask, as there is insufficient ventilation for cooking fires. A good deal of cooked food is brought in from outside. The kitchen usually contains three or four cooked hams; several loaves of bread; large covered platters of roast mutton, pork, or beef; baskets of fresh fruit; various meat pies; and other forms of prepared foods. The kitchen also holds cutlery and dishware.

15. Scullery/Laundry. This room contains a well of good water and several basins, kettles, and tubs for washing dishes and clothing. A small oil fire is allowed in this room so that water may be boiled for washing.

16. Dining Hall. This room contains one large table seating 20 people and



five smaller tables seating six people each. Other than the tables, benches and chairs, there is nothing in the room.

17. Cistern/Lavatory. This large lavatory smells abominable. It contains several wide benches with holes cut in the center and buckets placed beneath each hole. The buckets are emptied into a covered cistern in the center of the room. Keeping the lavatory clean and emptying the buckets (being made The Bey of Buckets) is a punishment given by Tayker for minor rules infractions.

18. Thief Ability Practice Rooms. These rooms are used by thieves who must hide out or lay low for a while. Here, they can practice their abilities and avoid getting "rusty" from a long stay in the sanctuary. There are no rooms specifically designed for practicing the hear-noise or read-languages abilities. The ability to hear noise can be practiced anywhere; it needs only a partner to make soft noises. Practicing the ability to read languages requires a library of books and scrolls in different languages, which the Night Masks don't have.

DMs should note that practicing in these rooms in no way grants experience points or raises ability levels. Such practice simply negates any decrease in ability due to inactivity. Working in these rooms can, however, allow a zero-level or nonthief character to become a 1st-level thief with 0 xp in six months.

18A. Pickpocket Room. This room is filled with benches for spectators and students. The east wall is crowded with wardrobes and trunks filled with clothes, purses, and wallets of various shapes and sizes. The clothes are primarily of the everyday type, but mixed in are more exotic styles from the east and south of Westgate. The teacher, usually a mid- to high-level thief, uses the clothing, purses, and wallets to demonstrate various pocket-picking techniques.

18B. Lock and Trap Room. This room has several doors for practicing lock picking, as well as various boxes, chests, and trunks. Most of the locks are trapped, but the traps are nonlethal: pins that jab, foul-smelling gasses, and punch traps (spring-loaded bricks or saps that punch a thief if he makes a mistake).

18C. Silent Movement Room. Sections of the floor of this room are covered with a variety of materials that are difficult to walk across silently: dry leaves, a platform made from creaky boards, sand and gravel, pebbles, etc.

18D. Hide-And-Seek Room. This room is adorned with pillars, statues, and curtains. Several large pieces of furniture stand in the center of the area. Thieves practice their hide-in-shadows ability by playing a form of hide-and-seek in this room. Lighted lanterns are placed in the room, and several thieves attempt to hide in the shadows. Another thief, the seeker, stands in the doorway and attempts to spot the hiders. While this is only practice, the game often generates a good deal of wagering among the participants and spectators.

18E. Climbing Room. The many walls in this room are made of different materials: brick, stone, wood, etc. From smooth and slippery to rough and non-slippery, the various walls give thieves a variety of different surfaces on which to practice wall climbing.

18F. Con Game Room. This room has several sets of tables and chairs, as well as a number of trunks containing all sorts of paraphernalia used in con artistry: playing cards (some marked); dice (some loaded); shells (for shell game cons); special forearm devices for quickly retrieving or hiding cards, dice, or a sucker's money; etc. Here, thieves learn how to cheat at cards, dice, and other forms of gambling, as well as how to run various types of con games.

18G. Acrobatics Room. This room contains various forms of equipment to help potential acrobats (those thieves with jumping, tightrope walking, or tumbling proficiencies) practice their skills. Three tightropes are stretched from wall to wall across the north end of the room. Each is only 3' off the ground. Toward the center of the area, lines painted on the floor are used as jump-off points to allow accurate measurement for both standing and running broad jumps. Heavy straw matting covers the southern floor in an area used for gymnastics and tumbling. To practice high jumping, several crates and boxes are stacked to the desired height, and attempts are made to clear these.

19. Laboratory. The walls here are lined with shelves holding all manner of chemicals, herbs, spices, and poisons. All containers are clearly marked in thieves' cant to denote their contents. While examining these, the PCs can find three vials of poison. In the center of the room is a large table used for mixing and preparing poisons for assassinations.

The House of Cards

This section of the Dhostar tombs was built long ago with the help of powerful magicks. It is now known to the Night Masks as the "House of Cards," thanks to Phagen's embellishments, detailed in this section. All doors in this area appear to be made of iron but are, in fact, made of a special dweomer-absorbing alloy. Some of the richer family members had sarcophagi made from this same alloy. These sarcophagi are treated the same as the doors with regard to unsealing and opening.

The special metal in the doors has the same strength and durability as steel, but it also absorbs all spells and psionic disciplines used or cast directly upon it or intended to affect it, such as *knock, transmute metal to wood, limited wish, alter reality,* or *wish* spells, or the psionic disciplines of *molecular manipulation, molecular rearrangement,* etc. The doors also absorb all spell-like magicks, such as the effect of a *chime of opening.* The doors act much the same as a *wand of negation* and will negate the effects of spells or magical devices used against them. Spells that affect an area are not canceled by a door unless cast directly upon the door (i.e., *light; silence, 15' radius; incendiary cloud;* etc.). It is impossible to *teleport* past the doors; all detection spells are absorbed by the doors; and the doors cannot be used to anchor a *web* spell or any *wall of fire/ice/iron/stone* spell. DMs should use the general rule that spells or spell-like effects intended to get beyond the doors (such as *teleport, phase door, passwall,* etc.), open the doors (such as *knock),* see beyond the doors (such as *wizard eye, glassee),* or damage the doors (such as *transmute metal to wood, disintegrate,* etc.) are absorbed and negated by the metal in the doors.

The doors will not absorb the dweomer of magical items, armor, or weapons that come in contact with them. They can be battered open, but are AC 0 and take 40 hp damage before breaking. Blunt metal or stone weapons or tools are required for such battering; edged and wooden weapons do no damage. Battering causes a great deal of noise; the booming echos of hammering on the doors can be heard throughout the temple complex.

Smashing and battering spells, such as any *Bigby's hand* spells, *spiritual hammer,* etc., are immediately dispelled upon contact with a door. Conjured or summoned creatures of any kind, such as aerial servants, elementals, and monsters, are immediately dispelled if they attempt to damage or get past the doors. *Polymorphed, duo-dimensioned,* or gaseous-form creatures or characters immediately return to their original forms if they attack or attempt to pass a door.

The doors can be opened only by unlocking them with the keys, battering them open, or picking the locks. Phagen, the arcanadaemon who rules the temple, has the keys. This leaves lock picking or battering as the only ways to open the doors. All doors were trapped by the original builders of the crypts. If a thief fails a find/remove traps roll and attempts to pick a lock, consult the Lock Trap Table (see sidebar). Once opened, the doors may be wedged or held open, and magical spells can be cast through the openings, but the doors still absorb or negate any spells cast directly on them.

The Dhostar family had all walls in this area of the tombs built with thin iron sheets down the center (this iron is the ordinary variety, not the dweomer-absorbing alloy). Thus, while the walls appear to be made of stone when viewed from either side, each wall is actually two stone walls sandwiching a thin section of iron. The iron in the walls does nothing to reinforce the dungeon, and the rules concerning blasting away with *disintegrate* and other damaging spells still apply. The iron does, however, effectively prevent the use of *passwall* spells in this area of the tombs.

The use of the magic-absorbing alloy and the iron-sandwich walls was stopped after this area of the tombs was built, due to the immense expense.

Most of the special doors have also been sealed with a card from a *deck of many things.* Phagen, the arcanadaemon overlord of the House of Cards, placed the cards. Because his daemonic magic resistance is high and he has a *wand of negation,* he is unaffected by the magic of the cards. However, Phagen's magic can affect the cards. He cast a carefully worded *wish* spell concerning the *deck of many things* before placing the individual cards on the doors. Because Phagen's *wish* encompassed the entire deck, he was forced to use all the cards, including the beneficial ones. (To use only the baneful cards would have required his casting a *limited wish* spell on each individual baneful card.) Phagen's *wish* has altered the magic of the deck so that it no longer functions exactly as described in the 2nd Edition *DMG.* The following conditions now apply to the cards:

—Instructions to discard from or replace cards in the deck are ignored. Cards drawn and kept by the PCs are not considered a deck until they have all 22 cards. Thus, PCs have no deck to discard from or replace cards in.

—Each card acts independently of the others. When drawn, it bestows its magic, then deactivates. Because of this, the rest of the cards do not disappear if the Void or Donjon card is drawn. The PCs may continue to draw cards from the doors even after the Void and Donjon cards are drawn. Deactivated cards will

Lock Trap Table

If a thief fails to make his find/remove traps roll and attempts to pick the lock of a dweomer-absorbing door, roll 1d6 and consult the following list.

1. The PC is jabbed by a poisoned needle and must save vs. poison or die instantly. If the save is made, the PC is incapacitated with nausea for 1d12+12 hours and cannot attack or defend himself, nor can he cast spells.

2. The PC triggers a gas trap. The gas released covers a 10'×10'×10' area in front of the door. A saving throw vs. poison must be made by everyone in that area to prevent instant death. If the save is made, the PC's strength is reduced to half normal (with fractions rounded up; strength will never be less than 3) for 1d12+12 hours.

3. The door is trapped with a spray device. When triggered, the trap squirts a fine mist of acid. The PC must save vs. poison or be blinded. This blindness can be cured by any number of appropriate spells. If the save is made, the PC's eyes will be sore and watery for 2d12+12 hours. Until his eyes cease to burn and water, the PC cannot attack or defend himself properly and receives a –3 penalty to his armor class, saving throw, and to-hit rolls.

4. This door is trapped with a dust blower. When triggered, a fine powder is blown into the PC's face. The PC must save vs. poison or die of suffocation. If the save is made, the PC is incapacitated with choking, sneezing, and coughing for 1-20 turns.

5. This door acts as a trigger for an explosive device. When the trap is sprung, it detonates a fiery explosion in the 10'×10' area before the door. The explosion does 4-24 hp damage to anyone within the 10'×10' area, and half damage to anyone outside the 10'×10' area but within 25' of the door (save vs. wands for half the above damage). Anyone farther than 25' takes no damage.

6. The trap fails to work. The triggering mechanism for this trap is either jammed or damaged in some way, and the lock may be picked as if the door were not trapped.

not function and can be handled safely.

—All 22 cards of the original deck must be found before the cards reactivate. Once all 22 cards are found and placed together, Phagen's *wish* is negated; the cards automatically reactivate and perform as described in the 2nd Edition *DMG*. If all 22 cards have been found and a PC still has a mandatory draw to make, as from the Fool card, the PC must make that draw from the complete and newly reactivated *deck of many things*. If the PCs are unable to find all the cards, a PC needing to make a mandatory draw suffers a –3 penalty on all saving throws until either the cards are found or the curse is lifted by a cleric of 25th level or higher. Optional draws can be ignored for this module, as any PC may draw any card he finds.

The back of each card is intricately decorated with a yin-yang symbol formed by a black dragon and a white dragon, each grasping the other's tail in its teeth. Unless the PCs have some knowledge of the *deck of many things*, they will not recognize these cards as traps.

Each card from the *deck of many things* covers a door lock. The card is held lightly, face against the door, in two small grooves running down the right and left sides of a shallow niche. Thus, the card can be removed only by sliding it upward or downward out of the niche. It is impossible to discern what is on the face of a card until it is drawn.

A "draw" is defined as any means used to remove the card from the door. This includes using hands, tools, or mechanical devices of any kind, such as tongs, to remove a card from its slot. It also includes all spells (and all magical devices that generate spell-like effects), such as *telekinesis, push, reverse gravity, gust of wind,* and psionic disciplines such as *telekinesis*. If a card is drawn using a spell or psionic discipline, the consequences of the draw fall upon the PC who cast the spell or used psionics. If a conjured or *charmed* creature is used to draw a card, the consequences affect the charmer or conjurer. For example, if a wizard uses an *unseen servant* or *charmed* henchman to draw a card, the consequences affect the mage and not the *unseen servant* or henchman. The same is true for *aerial servant* spells, *monster* and *animal summoning* spells, and all elementals, whether summoned by spell, device, or staff. Destructive spells cast directly at the cards (such as *disintegrate, meteor swarm,* etc.), or a psionic discipline (such as *molecular agitation,* etc.) are negated by the dweomer-absorbing metal of the doors. Simply touching a card is not considered a draw.

Unless otherwise noted, each card uses empathy to inform the person drawing it of all conditions concerning the card. For example, the Moon card informs the PC that he is granted one *wish,* and that he only has one turn to use it; the Flames card tells the PC that he has earned the undying enmity of an evil outer-planes being; the Gem card gives the PC a choice between receiving gems or jewelry; etc. The cards in the deck are decorated with lead-based paints, negating attempts to discern cards by a *ring of X-ray vision* or similar device. NPCs—including Jax, Shore Patrol members, and all henchmen, followers, and hirelings of the PCs—will refuse to touch the cards after it is realized that they are from a *deck of many things*. If an NPC is encouraged (without the use of magic) to draw a card before then, the DM should have that NPC draw a beneficial card and gain from it—with his subsequent refusal to ever try that trick again. Forcing an NPC to draw cards at the threat of death can be dealt with by having the NPC draw the Moon card and then *wish* that he could escape the PCs—and he will!

Each card must be removed, or drawn, before any attempt to pick that door's lock can be made. There is a 100% probability that the card will be knocked loose if a door is battered or forced open. In the case of battering or forcing a door, the magic of the card affects the last person to hit or touch the door (choose randomly if two or more PCs were the last).

When the temple is completed and open for business, the magical cards will be removed, and the dweomer-absorbing doors will be left open. The doors will not be removed because of their tremendous defensive value should the temple ever come under attack. However, until all is ready and the temple is consecrated to Mask, Phagen keeps the area sealed so that no infidel can desecrate it.

20. The Entrance. This tunnel was made long ago for the workers going to and from the Pit (area 24). It ends in a door that has no handles, knobs, or hinges visible from the east side. The door swings slowly inward if the PCs pick the lock or batter the door open.

Unless led by a member of the Pentad, no Night Mask member will pursue the PCs past this door.

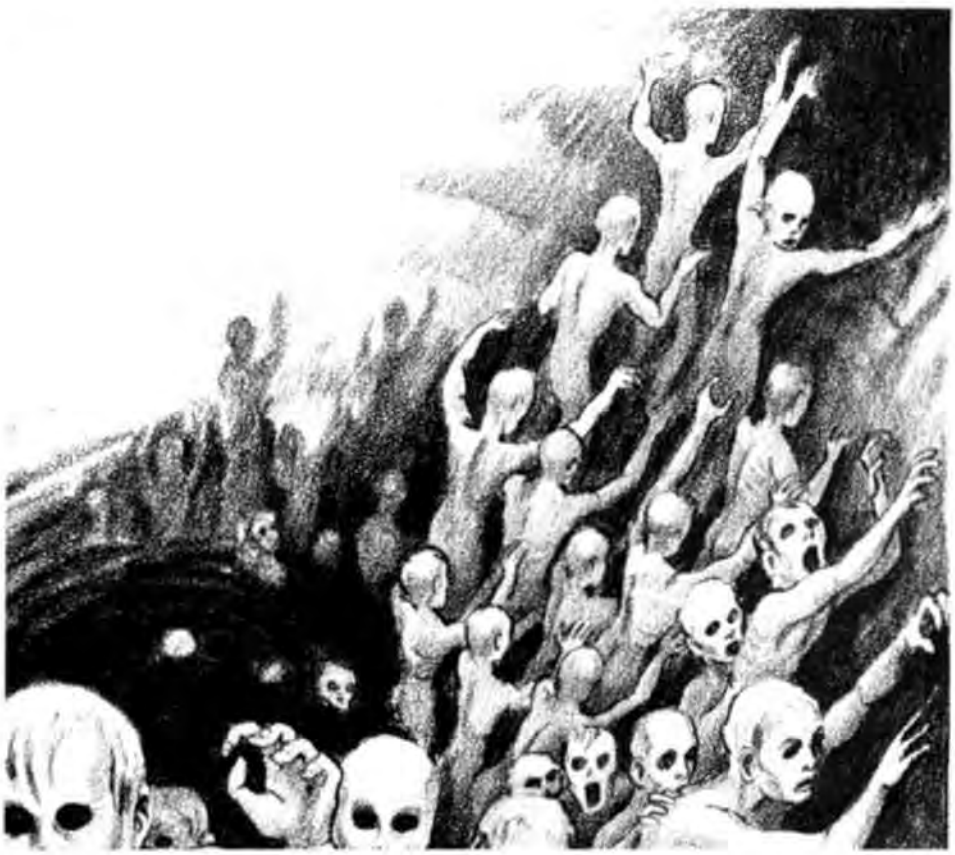
The door is sealed with the Idiot card. The PC drawing this card loses 1-4 points of intelligence and is affected by a *feeblemind* spell for as many turns as intelligence points were lost.

21. Guard Barracks. This room is directly across from the entrance to the temple complex. It is extremely filthy, having been fouled by the daemon guards who occupy the room. Should these guards fail in their duty, they will have to answer to Phagen. They will, therefore, fight to the death and pursue intruders throughout the complex.

Piscodaemons (6): AC –1; MV 6//18; HD 6; hp 35, 31, 27 (×2), 23, 20; #AT 2; THAC0 15; Dmg 2-16/2-16; SA poison, claw seizing; SD cannot be surprised, all water-based attacks are at –1 per die of damage; AL NE; MM2/30. If both of a piscodaemon's claw attacks hit, its victim is seized and drawn toward the creature's mouth (victim's attacks are at –1 to hit). Piscodaemon bites are poisonous (fatal in six rounds). If a save vs. poison is made, the victim is *slowed* for six rounds. These daemons are under the direct command of Phagen and refuse to obey any orders from the Pentad.

Derghodaemons (4): AC 0; MV 12; HD 11+22; hp 80, 74, 72, 69; #AT 5; THAC0 9; Dmg 9-12 (×5); SA 20 strength, grab and hold for +2 to hit on further attacks, generate *fear* in a 20' radius, cast *sleep* spell twice per day; SD create *darkness* in a 10' radius, *teleport without error;* AL NE; MM2/29. The unarmed and stupid derghodaemons are under the direct command of Phagen, but they take orders from the piscodaemons if such orders do not contradict any given by Phagen. The grabbing attack of the derghodaemon applies only to the first two attacks per round.

22. Door to the Pit Area. This door leads to the area called the Pit and is sealed with the Fates card. This card grants the PC the use of a one-time *limited wish* spell to avoid one situation. The spell cannot be used like a *wish* spell or broadened to help or assist the rest of the adventuring party. The Fates card affects the individual PC only and delivers him alone to safety. To avoid a situation, the PC need only announce he wishes to invoke the Fates. In most cases, this will do little more than *teleport* the PC to a place of safety (the exact location is up to the DM). It is very important to remember that this card does not create anything or make anything happen, and will not slay dragons or mighty warriors. The card merely allows the PC to avoid one specific situation.



23. Unfinished Crypt. The door to this room is sealed with the Jester card. Technically, when this card is drawn the PC may take either 10,000 xp or two more draws. However, as stated earlier, optional draws are no longer available because the deck has been separated. In this case, the PC is awarded the 10,000 xp, and the optional draws are ignored.

The crypt is empty, containing only rubbish and dust. There is no sarcophagus or ornament of any kind in the chamber. Only the dweomer-absorbing door marks the intended use of this room.

24. The Pit. The door is sealed with the Euryale card. Anyone drawing this card is not informed of the results. The curse—a –3 penalty to all saving throws vs. petrification)—bestowed by this card will become known to the PC immediately upon entering into battle with any creature with a petrification attack.

This excavation under the Dhostar family castle was started by the Lord Luer's great-grandfather, Lord Shornstar. It was intended to be an underground cathedral and mortuary. As Lord Shornstar was the only one particularly interested in the underground cathedral, work on the costly project stopped immediately upon his death. The excavation was abandoned and became little more than a trash pit. The pit is about 30' deep; water seepage has filled it with about 3' of murky water. The crude stairs used by the workmen remain.

The temple area (area 36) and many other areas were once conglomerations of many different tombs. Many of the rooms in the sanctuary are actually two or three tombs rearranged for the guild's use. The Night Masks simply removed the coffins and their contents, knocked out a wall or two, reinforced the ceiling, and began using the area as a dining hall, treasury, etc.

When the Night Masks first took over the area now called the Sanctuary of Mask and the House of Cards, the Pit was immediately used as a dumping point for the corpses and skeletons that

were disinterred from their crypts. Phagen, Tayker Palehand, and Cedric Cormyr have all had a hand in creating the undead of the Pit. These undead have no organized method of attack and swarm around anyone entering the Pit. They attempt to attack from all sides and kill as many victims as quickly as possible. The Pit contains the following undead:

Shadows (24): AC 7; MV 12; HD 3+3; hp 20 (×3) 17 (×18), 14 (×3); #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 2-5; SA strength drain; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; AL CE; MM1/86.

Wraiths (8): AC 4; MV 12/24; HD 5+3; hp 30, 26 (×6), 21; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-6; SA energy drain; SD silver or magical weapon to hit; AL LE; MM1/102.

Spectre: AC 2; MV 15/30; HD 7+3; hp 27; #AT 1; THAC0 13; Dmg 1-8; SA energy drain; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; AL LE; MM1/89.

Spectres, half strength (3): AC 2; MV 15/30; HD 4; hp 15, 13, 12; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 1-8; SA energy drain; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; AL LE; MM1/89. These half-strength spectres were Night Mask members who blundered into the Pit. They were drained of energy by the spectre and are under its command.

In addition, there is a mustard jelly floating lazily about in the murky water of the Pit. This creature has been contesting with the undead for victims and scrounging for the remains of cadavers in the water. It is ravenously hungry. If the PCs enter the Pit, it divides itself and attacks immediately.

Mustard jelly: AC 4; MV 9 or 12-18; HD 7+14; hp 44 or 22 each; #AT 1 or 2; THAC0 13; Dmg 5-20 or 2-8/2-8; SA exudes poisonous vapor in a 10' radius (save vs. poison or move at half normal speed, able to split in half and attack as two creatures; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, cold-based attacks score half damage, electrical attacks and *magic missiles* add hit points equal to the amount of damage rolled; AL N; MM2/77.

25. Acolytes' and Adepts' Cells. This area is sealed with the Gem card. This card gives the PC a choice of 50 gems or 20 pieces of jewelry. If the PC does not announce his choice within 30 seconds of drawing the card, the jewelry automatically begins appearing. The gems or jewelry begin slowly and magically falling from the card when a choice is made or after 30 seconds. It takes one full turn before all the gems or jewelry have fallen. If gems are chosen, one of each type of gemstone listed on page 134 of the 2nd Edition *DMG* falls from the card until 50 stones of 1,000 gp each have appeared. If jewelry is chosen or begins falling, 20 pieces of jewelry worth 2,500 gp each fall from the card. Note that the PC also gains up to 50,000 xp at the same time, as per the 2nd Edition *DMG*.

When the temple to Mask is finally completed and consecrated, these small cells will be used to house first- and second-level clerics. The cells are, as yet, bare and empty.

26. Storage. The door to this room is not sealed by a card and it is not locked. This small room holds blankets and bedclothes intended to be used by the acolytes and adepts. It also contains mops, buckets, brooms, and brushes for keeping the cells clean. Anyone opening the door will cause the brooms and mops to fall with a loud clatter, thus announcing the location of the PCs.

27. Library. The door is sealed with the Sun card. The PC drawing this card gains 50,000 xp and a miscellaneous magical item immediately. Roll 2d6 to determine the item awarded: 2 = *bag of holding;* 3-5 = *hat of disguise;* 6-8 = *boots of elvenkind;* 9-11 = *dust of appearance;* 12 = *scarab of protection.* The magical item is discovered when the PC suddenly feels a lump in his pocket, a slight tug on his cape, or some other slight but noticeable occurrence.

The library is not yet completed; lumber and tools are scattered about the room. Only the shelves on the western wall have been completed, but these stand empty. There are two large unopened crates in the room. If these are opened, the PCs find a great deal of miscellaneous library equipment such as small lamps, candles and candlesticks, bookmarks, quills and pens, bottles and vials of various colored inks, etc.

The room is guarded by four chaggrin grues. The grues have merged into the natural stone floor of the library and will surprise anyone entering the room on a roll of 1-5 on 1d6.

Chaggrin grues (4): AC 4; MV 12(3); HD 5+5; hp 32, 28 (×2), 24; #AT 2; THAC0 15; Dmg 3-6/3-6; SA surprise, cling and rend for 7-12 hp per round; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to earth-based magic or forms of attack; AL NE; MM2/72. The grues immediately attack anyone entering the room. They will pursue the PCs through the dungeon and fight to the death.

28. Door to Temple Area. The Flames card seals this door. Anyone drawing this card comes to the immediate attention of an ice devil named Gryp, a provost marshall in service to Mephistopheles. The card actually summons Gryp to the Prime Material plane.

Gryp (ice devil): AC –4; MV 6; HD 11; hp 55; #AT 4 or 1 weapon; THAC0 9; Dmg 1-4/1-4/2-8/3-12 or by weapon type; SA psionics, radiate fear in a 10' radius, cause *ice storm* once per day, grasping strength of 18/76; SD immune to fire-based attacks, +2 or better weapon to hit, regenerates 1 hp/round; AL LE; MM1/22-23; great spear (2-12 hp damage). Gryp may use the following abilities at will, once per turn or melee round: *fly, wall of ice, detect magic, detect invisible, polymorph self, gate* in two bone devils (70%) or another ice devil (30%) with 60% chance of success. Gryp's spear numbs with cold any creature it strikes, slowing the creature by 50% unless a save vs. paralyzation is made.

When the Flames card is drawn, an unbreakable bond forms between Gryp and the PC. Gryp will always have a general idea of the PC's location, but he will not know exactly where he is. The PC may have a general idea of Gryp's whereabouts, but only if he casts a *detect evil* spell. Gryp's hatred for the PC is absolute and unending; he will not be satisfied until the PC is forever dead. If Gryp kills the PC, the devil immediately attempts to return to the Nine Hells with the body. If Gryp is killed on the Prime Material plane, he is forced to return to the Nine Hells and will return to harass the PC after a year has passed. Only if slain in the Nine Hells will Gryp be forever destroyed.

Gryp wages a guerilla war against the PC. If the PC is in a group or with an adventuring party, the greater devil *teleports* to the party's general location (within 100') and, if possible, attacks the PC with his great spear, then *teleports* away. Gryp ignores other party members and attacks them only in self-defense or if they come between him and the PC. He attacks at least once every 24 hours, preferably when the party is sleeping. After the first attack, there is a 50% chance of another attack every 5-8 hours. If the PC is alone, Gryp *teleports* to the

PCs' location and attacks until either he or the PC is dead. DMs should note that Gryp's *teleport* ability is cancelled by the special doors in the House of Cards just as any other *teleport* spell. The doors must either be open or Gryp must wait until the PC is not in the House of Cards to attack.

29. Laity's Robing Room. The door is sealed with the Talons card. When a PC draws this card, every magical item he owns—no matter how powerful, well hidden, or protected—disappears and is gone forever. This includes all rings, potions, scrolls, rods, wands, staves, magical weapons, armor, and miscellaneous magical items, but not artifacts or relics. This does not include memorized spells, permanent magical abilities such as *infravision* or *protection from evil*, or items upon which spells like *light* have been cast. Included are all magical items on loan to others as well as items borrowed from others.

This room contains three large empty wardrobes. When the temple is opened, favored lay worshipers will be able to use this room to prepare themselves for ceremonies and rites.

30. Acolytes' and Adepts' Robing Room. The door to this room is sealed by the Comet card. The PC drawing this card must singlehandedly defeat the next hostile monster encountered to gain one experience level. DMs should insure that there is a viable monster nearby so that the PC cannot gain a level by choosing an easy opponent. The cards' benefits are lost immediately if the PC receives help, even accidental or unintentional, from anyone else in fighting the monster.

The room contains three large wardrobes filled with the special robes, masks, phylacteries, and other paraphernalia used by acolytes and adepts in the rites and ceremonies of the temple. There is a large mirror on the southern wall.

31. Ceremonial Guards' Robing Room. The door to this chamber is sealed with the Rogue card. When this card is drawn, it will appear to have no effect. The PC drawing the card will not realize or be informed that one of his henchmen has turned against him, or that he has gained the enmity of a powerful NPC. A *wish* spell negates the consequences of this card, but the caster of the *wish* must know exactly which henchman or powerful NPC has been affected.

If a henchman has turned against the PC, he waits until the PC is in some dire need, then leaves him in the lurch. The henchman may also do many minor things to hurt the PC, but these will always appear as accidents. For example, the henchman may secretly spook pack animals loaded with the PC's possessions, so that the PC's gear, equipment, and treasure are scattered across the countryside. In order to avoid retaliation by the PC's friends and relatives, the henchman will attempt to betray the PC in utmost secrecy.

If the PC drawing the Rogue card has no henchmen, a powerful NPC, such as the mayor of local city, can make the PC's life miserable. High-ranking members of a clerical hierarchy or magicians' guild can be equally devastating. The powerful NPC will falsely believe that the PC is responsible for some sort of heinous crime.

This room will be used by the temple guards and contains five ornate suits of full plate armor. The armor is inlaid with gold and silver in intricate geometric patterns. Each suit of armor is worth 15,000 gp, and any cavalier would love one.

32. Assembly Area. The door is sealed with the Fool card. The PC drawing the Fool card loses 10,000 xp immediately and must draw another card. This means that the next card encountered must be drawn by the PC who drew the Fool card. Refusal to draw the mandatory card carries a curse of –3 on all saving throws until a card is drawn. Although the card will not so inform the PC, if he refuses to make the mandatory draw, the next card that is drawn will affect him alone and not the person drawing the card. This counts as the mandatory draw, and the curse is lifted.

This area is completely bare and empty. The walls, ceiling, and floor are painted black. This area is used to assemble the priests, ceremonial guards, and laity in their proper order for processional marches.

33. The Grand Processional. This long, wide hallway will be used for the special ceremonial processions on the high holy days of Mask. The east and west walls of the hallway are painted to represent the holy days: Sun Mask, the solar eclipse, depicted by various paintings of full and partial eclipses; Muggers' Day, the first warm day of spring, depicted as a thief holding a coin purse while a shadowy figure lies prostrate in the background; Moon Mask, the lunar eclipse, depicted by paintings of partial and full lunar eclipses; Dark of the Moon, the monthly new moon, shown as a dark street scene in which close inspection reveals shadowy figures looting a warehouse.

34. High Priest's Robing Room. This room holds the different colored robes and masks the high priest of the temple must wear during religious services, lesser celebrations, and high holy days. The door to this room is sealed with the Donjon card. Anyone drawing this card is immediately gated into an alternate Prime Material plane that is nothing but an endless maze. The PC arrives there without spells or equipment, not even the clothes on his back. The maze leads nowhere and has no other living creatures in it, but does contain small springs of fresh water and edible plants. The PC trapped in this maze can survive until he dies of old age or boredom (whichever comes first). To others, the PC and the Donjon card appear to vanish, while all the PC's clothing, armor, weapons, equipment, spell components, etc. fall to the floor at the spot where he was standing.

To release the PC from the endless labyrinth, the Donjon card must be found. The card has *teleported* to a chest in Phagen's cloister (area 39). If a *freedom* or *gate* spell is cast directly on the card, the PC is released and suddenly reappears. If the imprisoned PC previously drew the Fates card (see area 22), he may use the magic of that card to avoid this situation and will be returned to the spot where the Donjon card was drawn. In any case, if the affected PC is a spell-caster, all known spells are gone and can be regained only through normal study or prayer.

35. Lesser Priest's Robing Room. The door to this room is sealed with the Balance card. The PC drawing this card is empathically informed that he must instantly change his alignment to one that is radically different. The PC must, in the future, act according to this new alignment or suffer the consequences.

Paladins, druids, or other alignment-specific characters may not wish to act in

accordance with a new alignment and thereby lose their present class benefits. However, any PC drawing this card has the option of refusing to change his alignment and can ask for an "instant penalty." The PC in question should have no idea what the penalty is for refusing to change alignment. This penalty is the instant loss of all but 1 hp. There is no saving throw and no immunity (either magical or natural) from this damage, but the damage can be healed either magically or at the PC's normal rate of healing. Once the penalty has been administered, the PC retains his alignment without further consequences from the card. PCs who agree to change alignment suffer only those penalties prescribed on page 49 of the 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook* under the heading "Changing Alignment."

This room is identical to the high priest's robing room but is used by the lesser priests to change into appropriate masks, phylacteries, and robes.

36. Temple. These double doors are made in such a way that the locked right-hand door must be opened to release the left-hand door. PCs battering either door will knock the Void card from its slot in front of the lock. The psyche of the PC drawing this card is trapped in a crystal mask located in Phagen's cloister (area 39). While the PC's psyche is trapped in the mask, his body must be led, fed, and taken care of completely. He cannot cast spells, wield weapons, or defend himself in any way. The PC will not speak and stares blankly into space. In this state, the PC will follow only the simplest one- or two-word instructions such as "walk," "stop," "sit down," etc. Contradictory or impossible commands such as "turn left and right," "talk," "fly," etc. are ignored. In this state, the PC is immune to all mind-affecting, psionic, *magic jar,* and possession spells.

The Void card instantly disappears when drawn but can be found in the chest in Phagen's cloister. DMs may allow a player whose character is in this automaton state to run an NPC or monster, such as the ice devil Gryp (see area 28), until the player's character is restored to playability.

The entire temple area has been consecrated by a *ceremony* spell. A *forbiddance* spell has been cast in the shaded area by Cedric Cormyr (see *Unearthed Arcana,* page 40, for the consequences of entering this area). This temple is what has consumed so much of the Night Masks' treasure. The temple is not made of solid gold, but it might as well be, considering the cost of religious materials and rites used in preparation for Mask's arrival. These preparations included the constant burning of special incense while the temple was under construction. After this room was completed, the entire temple area—floor, walls, and ceiling—had to be washed with unholy water. Because Mask himself will enter this temple and declare Westgate his unholy city, everything in the temple must be as perfect as possible so as not to offend him. Altar stones had to be cut precisely. All candles had to be perfectly shaped and made of only the finest wax. Candlesticks, lamps, and braziers had to be made by master craftsmen to precise make and measure. Such precision can only be had for a price, and that price was high.

If the PCs enter the temple, the Night Masks will have to wash the entire area with unholy water again. The PCs need only make the slightest scratch, chip, or dent in any item found in the temple to spoil it for religious use. Priests and paladins will recognize this fact instantly upon entering this area, as the same problem applies to good-aligned temples as well.

From the temple ceiling hangs a small, exquisitely carved crystal chandelier worth 5,000 gp. In each corner of the room is a gold brazier mounted on a silver tripod, each set worth 4,000 gp. The altar is made of polished pure black marble, and Tayker Palehand has surrounded it with a *glyph of warding.* The glyph delivers 10-40 hp electrical damage to anyone who enters the two 10'× 10' squares shown on the House of Cards map that contain the altar. Upon the altar are five platinum candlesticks worth 1,000 gp each. In each candlestick is a *candle of invocation,* but all five are dedicated to the neutral-evil pantheon of which Mask is a member. Also on the altar is a platinum platter worth 250 gp, holding eight blocks of *incense of meditation.*

On the north wall, flanking the altar, are what appear to be six man-sized bronze statues. Each of these statues stands on a small marble base engraved with a tenet of Mask. These tenets are: Avarice, Greed, Larceny, Malice, Rapacity, and Wantonness. The statues are, in fact, six harginn grues. The grues wait until the party is within 6' before they attack, surprising the party 50% of the time. If the party is suspicious or reluctant to approach them, the grues attack immediately. They defend the temple to the death and pursue intruders throughout the complex.

Harginn grues (6): AC 3; MV 15; HD 4+4; hp 22 each; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg 5-8; SA flames; SD *blink* ability, +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to fire-based spells; AL NE; MM2/73.

37. Lesser Priests' Quarters. The Key card seals the door to this room. Anyone drawing the card receives the benefits immediately. A treasure map (drawn by the DM) magically falls from the card. This map can act as as a convenient introduction to a module prepared by the DM, one from DUNGEON® Adventures, or a module from some other source. The treasure map need not be used by the PC. It can also be sold.

In addition to the treasure map, roll 2d6 and consult the following list to choose a magical weapon appropriate for the character's class (the PC receives only one of the following; if more than one of the weapons or magical items is appropriate for a PC, the DM may choose):

2	*sword +2, flail +2,* or *wand of magic detection*
3-5	*sword +1, hammer +1,* or *wand of illumination*
6-8	*sword +1, mace +1,* or *wand of metal and mineral detection*
9-11	*sword +1, flail +1,* or *wand of enemy detection*
12	*sword +1 (+3 vs. regenerating creatures), sling of seeking +2,* or *wand of negation.*

This magical item is awarded immediately, but it may not be immediately apparent. The magical item may appear in a jumble of other gear or treasure owned by the PC and not be found until he examines his equipment more closely.

The room contains a bed, a table, two chairs, and a large wardrobe. The walls are covered with tapestries depicting various ceremonial rites of Mask. The wardrobe is empty, and the tapestries have no resale value.

38. High Priest's Quarters. The door to this room is sealed with the Moon card. This card grants only one *wish* and must be used in one turn. The PC drawing this card may *wish* for anything (within the limits of a normal *wish* spell). As always, the exact wording of

the *wish* and not its intent will be granted. DMs should use "real time" after this card is drawn, giving the PC 10 minutes to hammer out and write down the exact wording of the *wish*. The written *wish* allows DMs to have the evidence in hand should the *wish* backfire on the PC. No *wish*, however worded, will affect the other cards. Wishing to draw them without penalty, wishing to know what they are before they are drawn, wishing that a particular card had not been drawn, etc., will have absolutely no effect and will waste the *wish*.

When Phagen cast his *wish* spell on the *deck of many things*, he worded the *wish* so correctly that no further *wish* spells will affect the cards. The consequences of drawing the Balance or Skull cards cannot be affected by *wish* spells. Any PCs killed by the minor death released by the Skull card are dead forever, and those trapped by the Void or Donjon card can be rescued only as detailed and cannot simply be affected by *wish* spells. Intelligence points lost by drawing the Idiot card can be replaced by a *wish*, and the experience points lost to the Fool card can be restored. While the exact items lost to the Talons and Ruin cards cannot be replaced, similar items can be *wished* for under the full discretionary power of the DM (replacement of all lost items is impossible).

The room contains a large bed, a table, four chairs, a large wardrobe, and a large chest. Three walls are hung with rich tapestries (worth 2,000 gp each) depicting solar and lunar eclipses. The wardrobe contains a platinum pen and inkwell worth 1,000 gp. The chest contains only blankets and bedclothes.

39. Phagen's Cloister. The door to this room is locked but is not sealed by a card (Phagen doesn't want to bother with removing and replacing a card to his own room). The room contains a large bed, a small locked chest, a table, four chairs, and a large wardrobe. The chest will contain either the Donjon or Void card (or both) if they have been drawn. Otherwise, the chest is empty. The wardrobe contains several nonmagical capes and robes worn by the arcanadaemon. On the table is a large decanter of brandy and eight glasses.

A crystal mask lies beside the decanter on the table. The mask has the magical ability to hold a person's psyche. It can be used by any wizard as the repository of his life force for a *magic jar* spell. If no PC has drawn the Void card, spells reveal nothing about the mask, and it appears to be nothing more than an unusual mask used in one of the temple's ceremonies. If a PC has drawn the Void card, anyone using a *gem of seeing* to view the mask, or anyone casting a *dispel magic*, *dispel illusion*, *true seeing*, or *detect illusion* spell directly on the mask sees that it is in the exact likeness of the face of the PC who drew the Void card.

If the mask is damaged in any way it shatters, rending a trapped PC's psyche asunder and leaving his body in a permanent automaton state. If the mask is placed directly over the affected PC's face, he returns to his normal self but must continue to wear the mask to remain so. If the mask is removed, he returns to the automaton state. The mask has no strings, ribbons, or other devices for holding it to the wearer's head, and there are no holes in it for securing attachments. The affected PC must somehow keep the mask securely over his face. The only permanent way of rejoining the trapped psyche with the PC's body is to cast either a *heal*, *wish*, or *restoration* spell on the PC while he is wearing the mask. If this is done, the

mask shatters into worthless dust, but the PC is returned to normal.

A secret door in the eastern wall leads to the treasure crypt of the Night Masks (area 41E). The secret door is made of natural stone, not the dweomer-absorbing alloy of the other doors. It can be magically located and opened. Phagen uses this door for easy access to the treasure crypt, and he will use it as an escape route should he need one.

Phagen, the arcanadaemon: AC –2; MV 12/18 (MC: B); HD 13+39; hp 99; #AT 4; THAC0 7; Dmg 1-4/1-4/2-16/1-6; SA *burning hands* spell at will, 18th-level wizard's spell ability, psionics; SD immune to *charm* and *suggestion* spells, poison, paralysis, and damage by normal weapons; AL NE; MM2/28; spells: *charm person; hold portal; magic missile; protection from good; taunt; detect invisibility; flaming sphere; ray of enfeeblement; web; wizard lock; dispel magic; fireball; hold person; lightning bolt; protection from good, 10' radius; charm monster; Evard's black tentacles; hallucinatory terrain; wall of fire; wizard eye; animate dead; cloudkill; feeblemind; passwall; wall of iron; death spell; disintegrate; Otiluke's freezing sphere; Bigby's grasping hand; power word, stun; reverse gravity; Bigby's clenched fist; power word, blind; meteor swarm.* In addition to these spells, the arcanadaemon may employ the following spell-like powers at will: *fly* (MC: B) for unlimited duration; *shape change* to any humanoid form, *telekinese* 3,250-gp weight, *create darkness* in a 20' radius, *dimension door,* and *teleport* (once per day). He also has a *wand of negation,* but he used it heavily while dealing with the *deck of many things,* and it has only 25 charges remaining.

Phagen is a lieutenant of Mask and reports directly to the god of thieves. The arcanadaemon regards all humans and demi-humans with distaste. He feels they are useful but untrustworthy servants. The PCs may attempt to negotiate with Phagen, but he will keep no bargains and will honor no contracts. He is civilized, urbane, and completely evil.

Unless the actions of the PCs or the whims of the DM dictate otherwise, this arcanadaemon will be discovered in his room. Phagen offers the PCs glasses of brandy from the crystal decanter with the words, "Good show, lads! Would you care for some brandy before we begin bashing each other about?" (The brandy looks and smells fine but is poisonous to everyone but a daemon; save vs. poison at –4 or die immediately.) Phagen's strategy in dealing with powerful intruders is to avoid personal risk. He will try to escape and seek out any surviving daemon guards, Night Mask members, guarding monsters, and Pentad members to organize into attack units to deplete the intruders' strength. Phagen will fight to the death, not out of fear of Mask but because his own arrogance will not let him believe he can be defeated by "lesser beings."

40. Crypt Guardroom. This bare room houses 10 juju zombies. These creatures attempt to prevent anyone from passing through the guardroom. They pursue trespassers throughout the complex until either they or their adversaries are destroyed.

Juju zombies (10): AC 6; MV 9; HD 3+12; hp 27 (×5), 22 (×5); #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg 3-12; SA attack as 6-HD creature; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, half damage from fire-based attacks and blunt or piercing weapons; immune to mind-affecting spells as well as poison, *magic missile, death,* and *cold* spells; turned as a spectre; AL NE; MM2/131.

These poor creatures were once some of the Night Masks' best fighters. As a cruel joke, Phagen asked for volunteers for a secret elite fighting force, then used his magic to turn the volunteers into the creatures now guarding the area.

41. Crypts. The door to this area is sealed with the Ruin card. The PC drawing this card immediately loses all wealth and real property, no matter how large or small, well hidden or protected. This includes all gems, jewelry, coins, ships, boats, carts, wagons, mounts, beasts of burden, pets, buildings and real estate of any kind, art objects, etc. This does not include any magical item, weapons or armor, or animal companions with intelligence scores above "Animal" intelligence. Magically summoned servitors, such as familiars, paladins' war horses, etc., are not harmed by this effect.

These five crypts were intended to hold the Oyyla household, a wealthy branch of the Dhostar family. However, Lady Oyyla was the only member to ever be entombed here. Even so, the expensive crypts still retain their original traps and guardians. All five rooms are identical, each with the same dimensions and a sarcophagus to the left of the door upon entering. The sarcophagi are made from the same dweomer-absorbing alloy as the doors. If the lock on a sarcophagus cannot be picked, the PCs must use a combined strength of 25 to pry the lid off. The Night Masks have converted some of the crypts for their own purposes.

41A. Mummy's Crypt. The door to this crypt is sealed with the Knight card. Upon drawing this card, the PC becomes aware that a 4th-level fighter of the PC's alignment is on the way to serve him. This NPC arrives in 13-24 days. If the PC does not wish the fighter to join him as a henchman, the fighter will go on his way, unperturbed. For the fighter's statistics, DMs may use the following NPC or create their own; the NPC's personal history is left to the DM.

Ignatius: AC 4; MV 9; F4; hp 25; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, D 14, C 13, I 10, W 11, Ch 12; AL as PC he serves; long sword, hand axe, dagger, chain mail, shield.

The sarcophagus is a trap left by the Dhostar family. If the PCs open the sarcophagus, they release a mummy that immediately rises and attacks anyone disturbing its slumber. A *limited wish* spell has been cast on the mummy to increase its speed and power and decrease its susceptibility to clerical turning and fire-based attacks.

Mummy: AC 3; MV 12; HD 7; hp 32; #AT 1; THAC0 13; Dmg 3-18; SA *fear* (no saving-throw bonuses applied to the save), disease; SD half damage from all fire-based attacks; +1 or better weapon to hit for half damage only; immune to poison, paralysis, *sleep, charm, hold,* and cold-based spells; turned as "special" on the cleric vs. undead matrix; AL LE; MM1/72. The mummy attacks until it is destroyed.

41B. Lady Oyyla's Crypt. The card sealing the door is the Throne card. This card grants the person drawing it an immediate charisma of 18 and the deed to a small keep. The deed magically falls from the back of the card and is inscribed with the name of the character drawing the card, verifying his ownership of the castle. However, the PC must make it out of dungeon with the deed in order to claim his property. The deed disappears if the PC dies before getting out of the dungeon. Once claimed, the property is treated as any other.

Anyone entering this crypt is immediately attacked by a guardian daemon placed there by an evil cleric in service to the Oyyla family.

Guardian daemon: AC 1; MV 9; HD 8; hp 36; #AT 3; THAC0 13; Dmg 1-6/1-12/1-12; SA breath weapon; SD immune to *charm, hold, sleep, polymorph, fear* spells; +2 or better weapon to hit; AL NE; FF/49.

The guardian daemon is unable to leave the crypt or venture past the doorway. It can, however, stand in the doorway and attack with its breath weapon to discourage anyone wishing to reenter the crypt. The daemon's breath weapon is a cone of fire 30' long, with a 10' base diameter, that inflicts 5-30 hp damage (save vs. breath weapon for half damage).

This crypt contains the moldering remains of Lady Oyyla, who was renowned for her beauty. Upon her death, the lady's husband had a platinum death mask made in her exact likeness. If the locked sarcophagus is opened, the PCs see the beautiful mask immediately. The mask is worth 4,000 gp if sold for the platinum but is worth 12,000 gp as an art object. Selling it at this higher price, however, will take 13-24 months before a buyer can be found. The corpse also wears a ruby necklace worth 3,000 gp and two rings: one of platinum and sapphire worth 1,500 gp, and one of gold set with diamonds worth 2,000 gp. Anyone disturbing the remains of Lady Oyyla to retrieve the mask, necklace, or rings sends up a cloud of dust that fills the entire crypt. This dust is heavily laden with bacteria from the moldering corpse, and anyone remaining in the dust cloud for more than one round has a base 50% chance of contracting a disease. Increase this chance by 5% for each round the PC remains in the dust thereafter. If a disease is contracted, consult the Disease (or Disorder) Table on page 14 of the 1st edition *DMG*.

41C. Flesh Golem Crypt. The door to this crypt is sealed with the Star card. This card affects any PC drawing it immediately, adding two points to the PC's prime requisite ability. All bonuses due to higher ability scores are granted immediately.

The locked sarcophagus contains a horrid flesh golem, placed here by Phagen. Anyone opening the sarcophagus is immediately attacked. The golem is 10' tall, with four arms and an extra set of eyes in the back of its head.

Flesh golem: AC 9; MV 8; HD 9; hp 50; #AT 4; THAC0 11; Dmg 2-16 (×4); SD cannot be surprised visually, immune to normal weapons and most spells; fire and cold-based spells slow the golem by 50% for 2-12 melee rounds; electrical attacks restore damage; AL N; MM1/48. Once it has been released from the sarcophagus, the golem will pursue the PCs throughout the complex until either it or the party is destroyed.

41D. Clerical Tracts Crypt. The card sealing the door to this room is the Vizier. The PC drawing this card is granted the one-time use of a special *contact other plane* spell. This spell has no chance of causing insanity and has a 100% chance of veracity, but whether the information is useful or can be acted upon is another matter. The PC need only state that he is using the Vizier card and then ask a question to receive an answer. The question must be carefully worded, and the DM (in the role of an other-planar intelligence) may answer the question vaguely.

This locked sarcophagus if filled with scrolls, books, and tomes of varying sizes. These are primarily religious tracts concerning Mask and the ceremonies dedicated to him. Many of the works are historical treatises concerning the Mask religion. None of these works are of any great value except to clerics of Mask. By carefully searching through the scrolls, the PCs can find a clerical scroll of three spells: *water walk, air walk,* and *wind walk.* There is also a scroll containing the recipe for homonculous creation (see the *DM's Sourcebook of the Realms,* page 77, for details).

41E. Treasure Crypt. This door is sealed with the Skull card. When the card is drawn, a minor death appears and attacks the PC.

Minor death: AC –4; MV 12; HD 7; hp 33; #AT 1; THAC0 13; Dmg 2-16 (scythe); SA never misses, always strikes first; SD immune to mind-influencing and death spells as well as cold, fire, and electrical attacks; AL N; DMG2/167. This creature attacks until destroyed. Any other party member who attacks the minor death (or someone else's minor death) immediately get his own minor death (with the same statistics) to fight.

There is a secret door in the western wall that opens onto Phagen's cloister (area 39). The locked sarcophagus contains the entrance to the vault of the Night Masks. The sarcophagus appears to be empty but has a false bottom. Pushing on the bottom with a combined strength of at least 21 causes the bottom to slide back, revealing a crude stairway down into darkness. The stairs descend sharply for 30' and end abruptly at a locked stone door.

Unlike the other doors in the complex, this door is not made of the dweomer-absorbing material and is not sealed with a card. The door opens on the east side of a 50'×50' room guarded by a mezzodaemon who attacks immediately and pursues until it or the PCs are dead.

Mezzodaemon: AC –3; MV 15; HD 10+40; hp 81; #AT 2 or 1 weapon; THAC0 9; Dmg 7-12/7-12 or by weapon type +6; SA 18/00 strength; SD infravision and ultravision; high magic resistance; immune to nonmagical weapons, paralysis, *charm, suggestion,* and poison; takes half damage from acid-, cold-, and fire-based attacks; AL NE; FF/66; spell-like abilities: become ethereal; use *magic jar, repulsion, wind walk,* and *word of recall* once per day; use *dimension door* twice per day; use *passwall* four times per day. The mezzodaemon can use, at will, any one of the following powers during a melee round: *comprehend languages, detect invisibility, detect magic, ESP, invisibility, levitate, polymorph self, read magic.*

Against the north wall are 400,000 cp in large chests, bags, sacks, and urns. Near the south wall are chests filled with 90,000 sp and one large urn filled with 6,000 ep. Against the west wall are two large chests; one contains 4,000 gp and the other contains 1,500 pp. In the center of the room are several more chests containing 10 potions (*extra-healing* (×2), *healing* (×3), *oil of acid resistance, treasure finding* (×2), *climbing,* and *gaseous form);* jewelry and bejewelled items worth 25,000 gp; and assorted gems worth a total of 20,000 gp.

It is obvious that many of the bags, chests, and urns once held more coins than are now in them. The Night Masks spent most of their money on temple preparations and ceremonial necessities. They use any interesting magical items they find and sell anything for which they have no clear use (they always have use for the cash such items bring).

PCs searching through the treasure will find a large, heavy book. This tome is a massive spell book containing 46 first-level mage spells: all 45 spells from the first-level list on page 126 of the 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook,* and the spell *scatterspray* from page 76 of the *DM's Sourcebook of the Realms.* Phagen has placed *explosive runes* on the book's

cover. If these are not dispelled before they are detonated, the entire tome is destroyed in the resulting explosion.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs are able to defeat the Night Masks, the violence in Westgate ends, and they are awarded the bounty. Unless the PCs specifically asked about the method of payment, however, the merchants will have failed to mention that the bounty cannot be paid all at once. The PCs may collect the bounty at a rate of 20,000 gp per year over the next five years.

If the PCs have exposed the Pentad and sacked the temple, they will have broken the back of the thieves' guild. Still, many members of the Night Masks remain abroad in the city. They will band together again to form minor gangs or even a new thieves' guild. It is unlikely that Hildegard Bombaster will be exposed by the PCs, leaving her free to start another guild. However, such a guild, operating without the huge sums of money or powerful personages the Night Masks enjoyed, will be too weak to challenge the Shore Patrol for dominance of Westgate. Thus, while violence, larceny, and theft will still be found in abundance in Westgate, it will be of a more wholesome variety than that practiced by the Night Masks. If the Night Masks are overthrown, Mask will be far more angry with his own servants than with the PCs.

Even if PCs deal a death blow to the Night Masks, it is unlikely that they will destroy the Shadow Society completely. Many members of the S.S. are out of town. When they return, they will band together with the Night Masks' thieves still abroad in the city. In such a case, the PCs will find a hard-core group of thieves and killers, probably led by Hildegard, aligned against them. DMs can use this group to cause further trouble for the PCs and Westgate. Shadow Society assassins may drop in on the PCs when they least expect it. Or, when the PCs return a year later for another installment of their reward, Hildegard may have a surprise waiting for them.

If the PCs have been unable to defeat the Night Masks but have discovered the gang's true intentions concerning Westgate, they may use this information to arouse Asgood Finestone and the family heads. In such a case, Asgood calls a general muster and routs out every crypt and sepulcher beneath Westgate. For revealing any Pentad members, the PCs will receive 2,000 gp each and will always be able do business with the trading families of Westgate at very reasonable prices (75% of normal).

If the PCs have been unable to defeat the Night Masks or expose any of the Pentad, they may sell their maps and information to other bounty hunters in Westgate. The price given for maps and information depends directly on accuracy and extensiveness, and is left to the DM's discretion, but the PCs should not receive more than 10,000 gp for a complete map with full details. Ω

(continued from page 36)

Concluding the Adventure

The PCs may elect to track or pursue the bandits, especially if Nik-Nik stole some valuable items. In this event, they will find that pursuit into unfamiliar woods is a dangeorus course of action. There is the possibility of meeting wandering monsters (roll 1 on 1d10 per hour spent in the woods). The DM can choose appropriate monsters to be encountered, create a random monster table, or use the uninhabited/wilderness encounter tables for temperate conditions in the 1st Edition *DMG,* page 184). Additionally, the bandits have placed pitfalls to cover their escape. A pitfall is encountered on a roll of 1 on 1d6 for the first 2-5 rounds of the chase. Such traps are detectable in the normal ways. A fall into one of these 6'-deep pits inflicts 1-4 hp damage. In addition, the PC will hit 2-8 spikes at the pit's bottom, taking an additional 1-2 hp damage each.

The DM may wish to prepare an exploration of the bandit's lair (located in a place of the DM's choice), should the PCs survive to find it. Things to consider are the treasures gathered from previous victims; the defenses of the lair (both active and passive); any improvements to these defenses made by the intelligent and resourceful quickling; and the combat effectiveness of the group if the bandits have suffered wounds or casualties. Some parts of the lair might be accessible only by Nik-Nik's *dimension door* talents.

Role playing each of the monsters should provide plenty of fun for the DM. If any of the bandits are detected, the DM should describe only what the PCs actually see: disembodied hands and arms groping about in the bushes, branches moving contrary to the wind direction, etc. Ω

The Deck of Many Things

Artwork by George Barr

The design on the reverse side of a *deck of many things* emphasizes the dual nature of the cards — their ability to bring great joy . . . or great suffering. Images of darkness and light predominate. Two dragons, a white and a black, are used here in the traditional yin-yang configuration symbolizing the duality of all things.

Comet

Balance

Gem

Moon

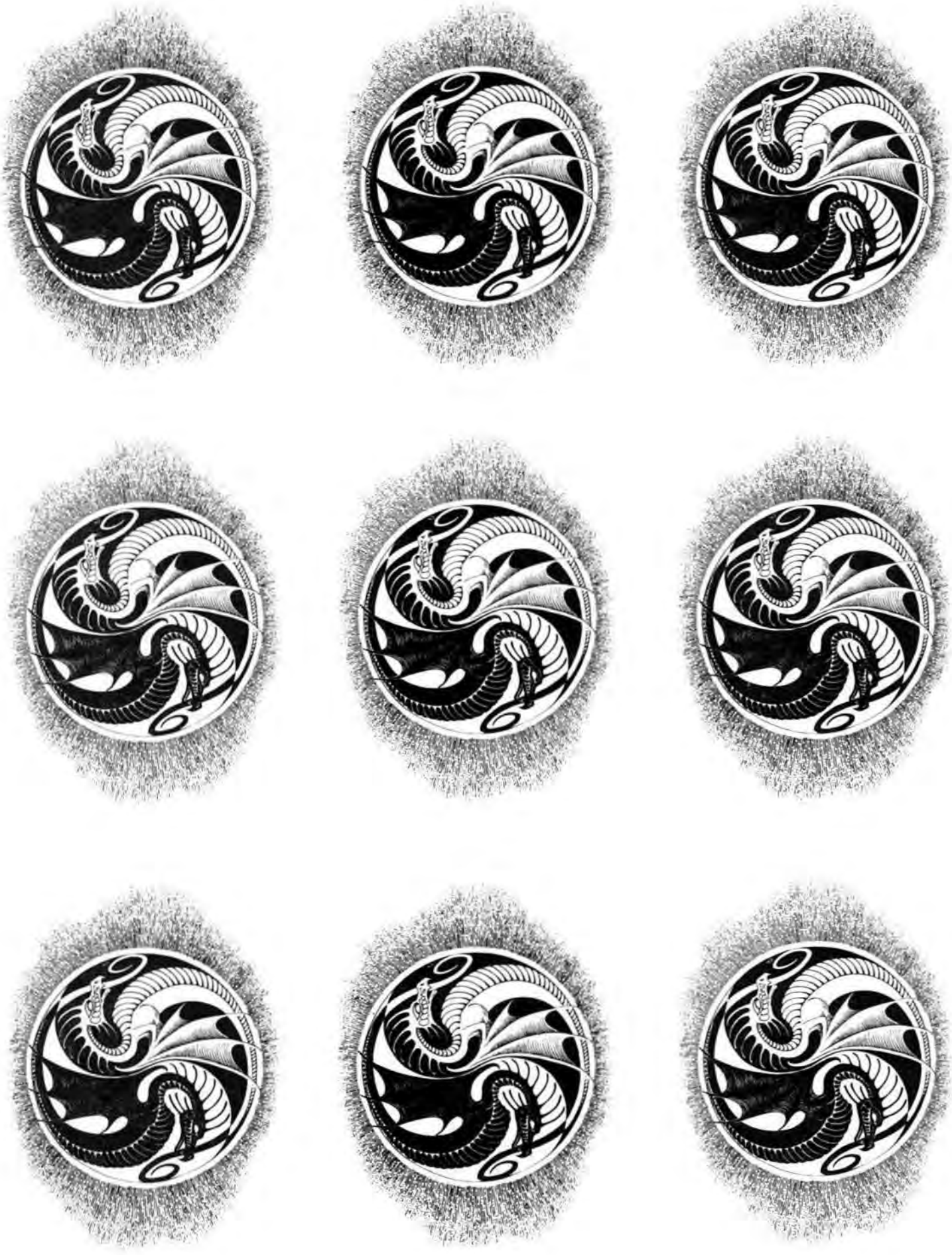
Star

Sun

The Void

Key

Throne



To preserve these cards for use in gaming, they can be laminated between two sheets of clear, self-adhesive plastic. You will need:
—1 yard (18" wide) clear Con-Tac paper,
—sharp scissors, and
—a flat work surface.

1. Carefully remove these pages of cards from the magazine and lay them flat on the Con-Tac paper backing. Cut around each sheet. There should be enough plastic left over to cover the other side of the cards.

2. Lay the plastic face down on your work surface and carefully peel away the backing paper. Position the card pages on the sticky side of the plastic, starting at one edge and smoothing the pages to eliminate air bubbles. Trim any excess plastic from the edges of the pages.

3. Lay the remainder of the plastic on the table, remove the paper backing, and place the unlaminated sides of the card pages on the sticky side of the plastic, smoothing carefully.

4. If your cards have some air bubbles when you're finished, insert the point of a pin in each bubble near the base and carefully smooth it flat.

If you'd like to acquire a *deck of many things* in color on heavy stock, be sure to buy the August 1989 (#148) issue of DRAGON® Magazine. Look for the accompanying article, "Luck of the Draw," by Robin Jenkins, for more information on the *deck of many things*.

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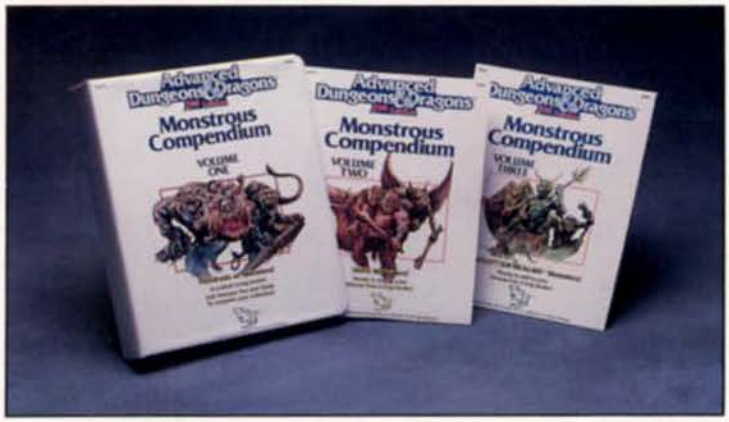

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